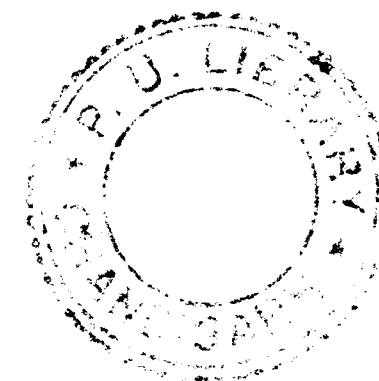


**“SOCIETY AND ECONOMY IN MUGHAL INDIA:
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF BRITISH ACCOUNTS”**

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ARTS
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
HISTORY**

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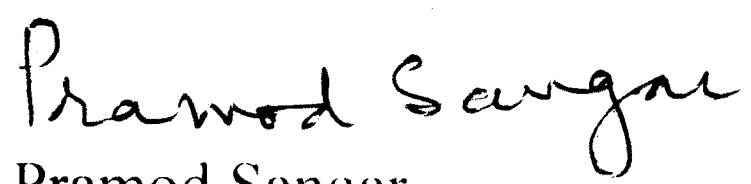
CERTIFICATE

It gives me pleasure to certify that this thesis on “SOCIETY AND ECONOMY IN MUGHAL INDIA: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF BRITISH ACCOUNTS” submitted by Karam Chand under my supervision is a piece of original research contributing to advancement of knowledge.

The researcher had completed this work to my satisfaction, and it is fit to be evaluated for award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the discipline of History.

Certified further that the format of the thesis, including spacing confirms to the Panjab University guidelines dated 14/02/2002.

Date: 31. 12. 2007


Dr. Pramod Sangar.
Professor

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PREFACE

With the advent of the Britishers in India the new avenues of trade and trading activities were opened up as the Britishers were found quite enthusiastic about Indian trade. They (Britishers) were simply over awed to see the abundance of goods available in this country. They also gave an important testimony about the socio –economic conditions, than prevailing in the country. The Britishers like, Ralph Fitch, John Mildenhall, William Hawkins, William Finch, Sir Thomas Roe, Thomas Coryat, Edward Terry, Ovington Peter Mundy, Marshall, Streynsham Master, William Hedges, Herbert, Bowery, Fryer and Hamilton Norris etc. not only raised the prestige of their nation in their eyes of the Mughals, but were able to procure certain trade facilities for their country. The early Britishers explored the trade potential that existed in the country and gave an estimation of the various commodities. Thus message was conveyed through various writings of the travellers and the British people showed a great gusto for the Indian goods.

*The present research work entitled “**Society and Economy in Mughal India: A Critical Analysis of British Accounts**” would rely heavily upon the European sources, particularly the British sources in the absence of suitable source material in Persian language. It is based on an intensive study of original sources. It presents a comprehensive and interesting picture of the socio –economic and cultural history of Mughal period beginning from 1556 -1707. However, Persian sources relevant to my topic (Society and Economy in Mughal India) have been used and Hindi sources are also not neglected as some of them like Surdas, Keshav and Tulsidas etc. throw a good deal of light on prevailing Socio –economic conditions of those times. Some Britishers have left valuable description of their observations and experiences in the land of the imperial Mughals in the forms of the various diaries, personal letters, official papers and communications addressed to their friends and relations in England. These sources throw a good deal of light on the social, religion, economic and cultural conditions of those times.*

However, an earnest effort will be made to study several primary sources and almost all available secondary sources to give a fair and analytical picture of the present work. This study would be conducted without any pre –conceived notion and the conclusions would be done accordingly in the light of the facts obtained from the cotemporary and near cotemporary records.

The present study is a pioneering attempt to analyse and evaluate the “Society and Economy in Mughal India: a critical analysis of British accounts.” During mughal period, a number of Britishers visited India and provide valuable accounts in the form of the Journals, Diaries, Travelogues and Letters draw light into the day today lives of the people belonging to different strata of society and explaining the economic scenario.

Scientifically –planned and well arranged chapter of this work endeavour to throw sufficient fresh light on various aspects of the social and economic life of the people of that age. I have divided my Thesis into five chapters and a brief description is given below:

Chapter I refer to the Social Structure, food habits, housing, cosmetics and manners, dress and ornaments of both men and women, high and low.

Chapter II, has been well planned and deals with the social status of the women, early marriage, dowry, divorce, purdah, harem life, sati, jauhar prostitution etc. the pitiable lot of the Hindu widows has also been described in considerable details.

Chapter III deals mainly Agricultural and non –Agricultural production; there is a detailed account of fruits, vegetables, cash crops, forest produce and mineral etc. the contribution of village craftsmen, the Jeweller, carpenters, black smith, potters, weavers, dyers, tailors and washermen etc.

Chapter IV, Means of Travelling and communication deals with road building activity, Kos Minars, Bridges, Tanks and wells, The Adhawiayas, Bats, Carvans, Bazaras, Coaches and Palquins, Horses, Camels, Cows, Oxen, Elephant

*I shall be failing in my duty if I do not thank the eminent Historians like **Prof. Irfan Habib**, **Prof. Shireen Moosvi** and **Prof. V.N. Dutta**, for having encouraged me regarding my project and gave some valuable tips during the 62nd session of Indian History Congress at Bhopal (M.P.)*

*I am grateful to the staff of various archives and libraries where most of the research for this thesis was done: Department of archives, Chandigarh: the National Archives of India, New Delhi: and the Haryana state Archives Panchkula: the A.C. Joshi Library, Panjab University, Chandigarh: Department of History Library, Panjab University, Chandigarh: Dwarka Das Library, Chandigarh: British Library, Chandigarh: Indian Institute of Advance Study Library Shimla: Himachal Pradesh University Library Shimla: Himachal Pradesh Secretariat Library Shimla: Himachal Pradesh State Library Solan: Mahima Library Nahan (H.P.): Bhoj University Library Bhopal (M.P.): Kurukshetra University Library Kurukshetra: Kurukshetra History Department Library Kurukshetra: and Guru Nanak dev University Library Amritsar: I shall ever remain grateful to **Dr. Rashmi** Deputy Librarian and **Mr. Mritunjay Kumar** Assistant Archivist, A. C. Joshi Library Panjab University Chandigarh for valuable help during my research work,*

My thanks are due to Mr. Sudhir Sharma, Mr. Gian chand, Mr. Virender Kumar and Mr. Daljeet Kumar for their kind help and co-operation.

Sincere appreciation and thanks are due to my dear friends, staff members for their unending help and cooperation. My special thanks are to all my subjects without whose co –operation in the present study would not have been possible.

It is with great pleasure and a sense of deep regards that I would like to express my gratitude to my worthy parents for their understanding, patience and sagacity that they showed at every step. Above all, words fail me to adequately acknowledge the debt I owe to them.

Last but not the least; I gratefully acknowledge my wife Bimla's consistent emotional help, generosity and goodwill which remained the mainstay in my research endeavour.

etc. the means of communication like Dak-Chauki, Mewars and runners, Post arrangements, Secrete service etc.

Chapter V, Urban Economy deals with development of towns consuming and producing classes, mandis market and towns, craft production, trade and commerce, import and export and professional class etc.

Finally, the conclusion gives main theme of all these works. It provides "resume" of all the above chapters and their importance related with the Mughal period.

In the completion of this work, I have been helped by a number of persons and institutions.

*I would like to express my deepest sense of gratitude to my worthy supervisor, **Dr. Pramod Sangar**, Professor, Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh for inspiring me to enter this field of research. I am grateful to him for the valuable help and guidance which I received from him at all stages of this work.*

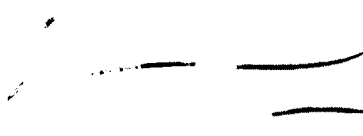
*I express my deep sense of gratitude to **Dr. Veena Sachdeva**, Chairperson, Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh for the encouragement and providing me necessary facilities in the department for completion of this work.*

*I wish to express my sincere thanks to **Dr. J.S. Dhanki**, Professor, department of History P.U. **Dr. Surinder Singh** Prof. History P.U. & all other faculty, Office and Library members of the department who has provided the necessary confidence and encouragement in my moments of exasperation.*

*I am thankful to late. **Dr. R. C. Jauhri**, Prof. Department of History Panjab University Chandigarh for his valuable advice suggestions and good wishes. I am highly beholden to late. **Dr. S.P. Sangar**, whose illustrious son Dr. Pramod Sangar, my guide put before me the most of the scholarly articles and books written by a Great Historian Dr. S. P. Sangar. I deeply appreciate his human endeavour to bring me in contact with those masterly works of Prof. S. P. Sangar which proved useful to my research. I am thankful to **Dr. Rajiv Patnaik**, Reader Dept. of Geology P.U. Chandigarh for their valuable co-operation.*

*I further express a deep sense of gratitude to my mother in law, brother, sisters, Kiran and Mr. Ajay who have been perennial sources of inspiration in my life and who helped me through thick and thin. I must not forget to thank my typist **Mr. S.L. Sharma** for providing the computer facility and giving the final shape of the manuscript.*

*I must owe a debt of gratitude to **I.C.H.R.** who has just informed me that a financial grant has been sanctioned to me for my present work.*


Karam Chand

INTRODUCTION

History is indeed a record of human civilization in its varied aspects from the days of remote antiquity. Its aim is revealing in the right perspective the life of people at different stages and periods of time in the past. The history of any particular country deals with the political activities of its people, their diplomatic relationship, economic transactions, social habits and customs, culture, art and architecture and their problems of weal and woe. Indian history is a fascinating subject, but it becomes more fascinating after a study of foreign travelers, who visited the land in the early ages. Many adventurous souls have left behind entreating accounts of their travels in India.

From time immemorial India has been visited by a host of Travellers, such as Immigrants, visitors, missionaries, conquerors and traders, who came in quest of the new ventures. They belonged to different ethnic and linguistic groups, varied ranks, professions and nationalities. But one thing was common among as their foremost interest in India remained due to a variety of reasons. Whether this interest was in its lush green vast fields, open spaces, fertile land, unfold wealth, raw material or its peaceful atmosphere, assimilative nature and hospitality of the people. The new -comers were impressed consciously or unconsciously with something of this country or some aspects of its life.

With the discovery of Cape of Good Hope route by Vasco da Gama in 1498 begun a new phase in the relationship between India and Europe. This development was only logical corollary of the renaissance which brought about an immense change in the popular outlook in Europe. The inborn love of man for knowledge adventure and gain had found new expression. People explored, traveled and traded on an ever increasing scale. Man exhibited a growing confidence in his own energy and intelligence and expressed it in the form of new innovations and discoveries.

After the return of Vasco da Gama with a valuable cargo of spices, the king of Portugal, Manoel, declared himself the “sovereign of India”. During the

opening of 16th century the Portuguese enjoyed a monopoly of trade to the East, a monopoly formally granted to them by the Fiat of the papacy, according to which all undiscovered countries of the East were assigned to Portugal and all lands on the West to Spain. The pronouncement of the pope was universally regarded throughout Catholic Europe as the highest possible expression of international law. But the England and Holland openly defied and refused to obey the papal Bull, due to geographical, religious and political reasons¹

In a bid of supremacy, the other European powers, gradually, joined this race for a lucrative trade and commerce. The traders of London established the East India Company in 1600 and Dutch, founded the Dutch East India Company in 1602. The French government also established its company in 1664 in a serious bid to control the Indian trade. All this resulted in a considerable commercial and maritime rivalry. These developments, along with the lure of quick fortune and the curiosity to know the unknown lands, and the missionary zeal, drew a large number of European adventurers to India.

Many European travellers from different countries like England, Portugal, France, Italy, Germany and Spain –visited India by diverse routes during the reign of Akbar to Aurangzeb. Quite a few of them could leave valuable memories, Diaries, Journals, Travelogues, personal letters, communication addressed to their friends and relatives in Europe, official paper and reports of their missions. These travellers reflected on a variety of subjects ranging from Mughal polity to daily life of some of the most neglected sections of Indian society.

A large number of travellers, who left their accounts in this regard, came from Great Britain. Ralph Fitch, John Mildenhall, William Hawkins, William Finch, Sir Thomas Roe, Thomas coryat, Edwad Terry, Ovington, Peter Mundy, Marshall, Streynsham Master, William Hedges, Herbert, Bowery, Fryer and Hamilton Norris write and publish the accounts of their travels.

¹ P.E. Roberts, *History of British India under the Company and Crown*, London, 1921, pp. 15 -16. E. F. Oaten *European Travellers in India* Introduction , pp, 1-2., E. F. Oaten, *European Travellers in India* . London . 1999, p. 106 -7.

With the coming of the Europeans, particularly, the Englishmen in India a new chapter were opened in the history of India's commercial and social relations. The Englishmen were hardworking, dexterous and innovative. The new avenues in social and economic history were opened as the English travellers not only raised the prestige of their nation in the eyes of the Mughals but were able to procure, certain trade facilities for their nation. A number of Britishers, who visited India, provided valuable information and gave a fair and analytical picture of the society and economy during the Mughal period.

W. H. Moreland, the great pioneer in the domain of Economic history, opened the new vistas of research in this field. His monumental works, *India at the death of Akbar*, *from Akbar to Aurangzeb* and *Agrarian system of Moslem India* have remained virtually the trendsetters for economic history of medieval India. Besides writing these valuable works, he also wrote a number of articles and edited a large number of books; a classic example was *Relations of Golconda in the early 17th century*. Sir W. H. Moreland has exhibited high industry in the collection of data and its proper descriptive approach. Irfan Habib continued with the great tradition and legacy left by Moreland is a brilliant successor whose *agrarian system of the Mughal India, 1556-1707*, is held as a great work (in which, indecently, the exhaustive bibliography includes a useful list of European Travellers, accounts of the Mughal Empire). His masterly work has exhibited his brilliance.

'*The English Factories in India 1618-1669*' (ed. W. Foster, 13 Volumes, Oxford, 1906-27) and *the English Factories in India (New series 1670-1684 ed. C. Fawcett, 4 Volumes, Oxford 1936-55)* which is the veritable store house of information and throw a good deal of light on various aspects of trade and society.

However, I would, like to give a summarized version of the travellers accounts relevant to socio-economic history of India, in the following pages:

Ralph Fitch (1583-91) the pioneer among the English travellers to India. His (Ralph Fitch's) accounts discuss the apparently inexhaustible possibilities of

trade with India and Hurmuz. Fitch pays glowing tribute to the prosperity of Bijapur and praises the Diamonds from Golkonda. He says: 'Agra and Fatehpur are two very great cities, either of them much greater than London and very populous'. At Prayaga, near Allahabad the sight of naked beggars disgusted Fitch. He gives a detailed description of idol worship in Banaras, and remarks that cloth, particularly for turbans, was produced there in large quantities. He describes the technique of gold-mining at Patna, and the cotton and sugar trades in the town. There, he also saw a Muslim Saint whom he described as 'lasie lubber', although the people 'were much given to such prating and dissembling hypocrites'.

John Mildenhall (1599-1606), a self-styled ambassador from Queen Elizabeth to Akbar, visited India twice. In a letter dated 3 October, 1606 he gave an account of the trade concessions he had obtained from Akbar despite the Portuguese intrigues and insinuations. The English sharpened their trade activities with the establishment of the English India Company. But the modern scholars, however, don't seem to agree with his claims. But we find the real battle for trade with the Mughal Emperors commenced after the establishment of the Esat India Company in 1600.

Captain William Hawkins (1608-13) in August, 1607 landed at Surat, but Portuguese hostility made life difficult for Hawkins and his colleague, William Finch. Leaving Finch to look after the goods at Surat, Hawkins made his way to Agra, arriving in the middle of 1609. Jahangir received him graciously and listened attentively to king Jame's letter. Hawkin's fluency in Turkish language prompted Jahangir to invite him to stay at court as a resident ambassador. He gave him the rank of 400 horses, 'a post in the imperial service that was nominally worth over three thousand pounds a year sterling'. Hawkins' repeated attempts to obtain a royal farman (edict) for trade concessions were, however, unsuccessful. We receive from his narrative a full account of Jahangir's temperament and propensities. He describes the hierarchy of imperial officials,

known as mansabdars, the income and expenditure of the Mughal emperors, and the magnificence of their court.²

William Finch (1608-11), who was left at Surat by Hawkins, arrived at Agra in April 1610. He travelled to Bayana, and went around the Panjab, but his enterprise when buying Indigo got him involved in considerable difficulties. Even his superiors became suspicious of him. He left for London but died en route at Baghdad. He had, carefully, maintained his diary which gives a detailed description of the towns he visited and the people and curiosities he observed. Historically, his journal is more important than Hawkins' narratives.

Captain Thomas Best (1612-1614), arrived at Surat in September 1612, obtained a spectacular victory during his tenth voyage over the Portuguese fleet at Swally. The Mughals were highly impressed to see his great valour against Portuguese and entered into trade negotiation with them and issued a royal farman in 1613.

Nicholas Withington (1612-16), who had learnt Arabic in Morocco, was sent to Agra. He then went to Ahmadabad to assist in the purchase of Indigo, which was the prime commodity of India after textiles. His adventurous career in Cambay and Thatta in Sind began from that time onwards. He escaped certain death in Sind only to be incarcerated in Ajmer. He failed to convince the Surat factors of his innocence and was forced to sail for England in February 1617. Withington's Journal describes his vicissitudes at length, but also provides a lively account of Sind -the banians (Hindu merchant) and the Baluchis.

Thomas Coryat (1612-17), a courier of James I, the most interesting character among the seventeenth-century English travellers, wrote about India. In October 1612, he left on his Eastern journey, intending to write a book about the observations. He was neither a merchant nor a sailor. Travelling through Constantinople, Syria, and Iran, he arrived at Agra via Multan, Lahore, and Delhi. From Agra he visited Ajmer in order to call on the emperor, but he avoided his company in

² William Foster, (ed.) *Early Travels in India*, p. 61.

the interests of British trade, for Coryat, frequently, offended Muslims by his indiscreet remarks about Islam, though no one harmed him. Coryat travelled widely in northern India and visited even the Hindu pilgrimage centers of Haridvar and Jwalamukhi in North-East Panjab. He spoke both Hindustani and Persian fluently. The common people called him a half-witted English fakir. He died at surat in December 1617. Coryat's eccentricity coloured his cynical observations, but they are very informative. Unfortunately for us, his detailed descriptions of his Indian tours have not survived; his letters, though few, are very valuable historical documents. Like all other contemporary travellers, Coryat was baffled by the extremes in Jahangir's character. He describes his cruelties and his compassion. To him Jahangir was a true patron of the poor, who readily conversed with them and offered them gifts.

Edward Terry (1614-1620) joined Sir Thomas Roe at Ujjain in February 1617 and served as his chaplain. He accompanied Roe to Mandu and from there to Ahmadabad. In September 1618 he left India but his account is quite interesting and revealing

Terry's narrative describes "the Mughal empire, the most remarkable examples of art and nature it contained, the people of India, their habits and diet, women, language, learning, arts, riding, games, markets, arms, valour, mosques, and Hindu and Muslim rites and ceremonies. It gives an interesting account of potato and tobacco cultivation. He was also impressed by Indian gunpowder, but was critical of lesser guns made for footmen who are somewhat long in taking their aim, but come as near the mark as any I ever saw". He has also recorded his impression about the mode of travelling and conditions prevalent during those times³.

Thomas Roe's (1615-1619) the growing intrigues against the East India Company by the Portuguese, in the wake of their declining commercial and economic influence, prompted the company's directors to urge king James to send Sir Thomas Roe as an ambassador to Jahangir's court. Leaving England

³ E. F. Oaten, *European Travellers in India*, London, 1909, pp. 162-163.

in February 1615, Roe arrived at Ajmer on 23 December 1615 and presented his credentials to the Emperor. Roe ceaselessly tried to persuade Jahangir to enter into some kind of trade agreement with the English. He travelled with the Emperor as far as Ahmedabad, until, finally, at his request, the Emperor allowed him to return home, giving him a letter for King James. Although Roe had failed to obtain a formal treaty, he secured substantially improved terms, under which the English Factory at Surat was maintained, and various branches opened.

Thomas Roe's famous epigram that 'Europe bleedth to enrich Asia' was a big tribute to the wealthy economic condition of the country and clearly reveals the 'struggling' efforts of Englishman to gain an initial foothold in this country for the monopoly of Indian goods as 'no where to be seen'. Throughout his stay, Roe had tried to restore English prestige, which had been eroded by the disorderly behavior of English officials. In his journal and correspondence, Roe gives vivid descriptions of the magnificent Mughal court and the Naw Ruz (New Year's Day) festivals. The Emperor's birthday weighing ceremony, is given in minute detail. The journal also discusses the influential Empress, Nurjahan, and the indifference displayed by her brother, Asaf Khan, towards the British. Roe also refers to Jahangir's insatiable appetite for gifts and European novelties as well as his extremes of character. He left for England in February, 1619.

Peter Mundy, visited India thrice between 1628 and 1656. Having come to Surat in September, 1628 as a Cabin boy on a merchant ship of the East India Company, he joined the Agra factory in 1630.⁴ In the account of his travels, he refers to some of the peculiar socio-religious customs of the people, their economic condition and has a great deal to say about the Mughal polity and events of political importance. In the capacity of an eyewitness, his description of Agra, its markets, and its houses, is both vivid and picturesque. He compares Fatehpur-Sikri with European cities. The depiction of severe famine of 1630 and the description of the sufferings of the people is very touching.⁵

4 Peter Mundy *Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia 1608-1667*, (ed.) R.C. Temple, (Cambridge 1914), Vol. II, p. IX, XX, LVII.

5 Ibid. pp. 246, 264, 305.

SIR THOMAS HERBERT wrote a description of his travels. His account contains a very fair picture of the closing years of Jahangir's reign. He, closely, observed some of the socio-religious customs of the Hindus. He also extended his comments on modes of transport and praises the highway from Agra to Lahore.⁶ He also mentions about the unloading of the English ships by the native boats form by variants.

JOHN MARSHALL: - was a factor in East India Company. During his stay in India, he visited various places mentioned by him like Benga, Hugli, Madaras, Balasore, Malda, Patna, Mursidabad and Aurangabad. He comments in detail on the condition prevailing in the Company's factory at Patna, its dependencies, and difficulties. His remarks on Hindu religion and philosophy are quite detailed and impressive.⁷

THOMAS BOWERY: His description and careful portrayal of native boats are among the best of its kind. He explains that the so called Golconda mines were, in reality, many miles away from Golconda. His notices of 'current coyness' and of the cowry are among the most valuable of their kind. His references to many notable Anglo-Indians of his day are of additional interest, he having ventured to show these men in their ordinary daily life, rather than in their official character as they appear in the Company's records.⁸

JOHN FRYER: was a surgeon in the East India Company. He paid particular attention to the scientific acquirements of the people of the East, and he, naturally, investigated with care the extent of their knowledge in medicine ad surgery. His account of the Island of Johnna, of the cave of kankeri and Elephanta is in, a way, excellent His sketches of the Authorities of the fakirs and

6 Sir Thomas Herbert, *Some years travels into Asia and Africa*, (London. 1677), pp. 2, 4, 66, 67, 68.

7 John Marshall, *John Marshall in India Notes and Observations in Bengal 1668 -72*, (ed.), Shafaeat Ahmad Khan (London, 1927), pp. 1 -17.

8 Thomas Bowery, *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Way of Bengal 1669 – 79*, (ed.) R. C. temple (Cambriadge, 1905), pp. 12 -49.

the customs of the people of Surat, are all admirable. His observations upon what he saw are instructive as well as entertaining.⁹

STREYNESHAM MASTER: was the chief representative (Agent) of the East India Company's factories on the Coromandel Coast and in the Bay of Bengal. The diaries and private papers of Streynsham master throw considerable light on Anglo-Indian life in the 17th century. He had, vividly, explained the native and Anglo- Indian terms and recorded about the management of the Factories -the system of trade and economic conditions of the period. His account is more valuable for the commercial history of the period than other aspects of society.¹⁰

SIR WILLIAM HEDGES: was the governor of Bengal in the east India Company. He left a good account of his stay in India in the form of his diary. As a source of information, it is valuable, chiefly, for exhibiting the attitude of the local governors towards foreign traders. Hedges came into frequent contact with Shaista Khan, the Nawab of Dacca, and found him rather chary of granting facilities for trade. A hedge attributes this to the covetous nature of the governor and writes that it was necessary to support every petition to his court with adequate presents, as was the case with the Mughal Emperor.¹¹

ALEXANDER HAMILTON: In this travelogue, the focus of his description is mainly on socio-economic conditions of the period. He seems to have been acquainted with all parts of India which bordered on the Eastern coast.¹²

JOHN OVINGTON: In his travelogue, considerable remarks are found on the coins of India and the kingdom of Persia. He also draws light on social habits

9 John Fryer, *A New Account of East India and Persia Being Nine Year Travels 1672 -81*. (ed.) William Crooke (London 1912), Vol. I, pp. 13 -23.

10 Streymsham Master, *The Diaries of Streymsham Master 1675 -1680*, (ed.), R. C. temple (London 1911), Vo. , p. 1-9.

11 William Hedges, *The Diary of William Hedges 1681 -87*, (ed.) H. Yule (London 1888), Vol. II, p. 7 -17.

12 Alexander Hamilton, *A New Account of The East Indies*, (ed.) William Foster (London 1930), Vol. I, p. 1 -4.

of the inhabitants of Surat¹³ and of very interesting description and conveyances including ship building of trading methods.

SIR WILLIAM NORRIS: His account portrays an overall picture of Mughal polity, socio-religious customs, as well as trade and economy of the period. He presented his credentials to Aurangzeb of the court. Even Manucci describes that “never had an ambassador from Europe appeared with such pomp and magnificence. Haji Muhammad Sayyid, from whom he collected his information’s about Aurangzeb’s army, and his family. The representatives of various nationalities such as the Portuguese, the Dutch and the French, often, were seen coming to pay their respects to him and he never failed to avail the opportunity of collecting information from them”.¹⁴

Medieval period of Indian history is an interesting and indispensable link between the ancient and the modern. It was a period, partly of transition and partly of transformation, and all these, in the long run, made it one of the most formative periods in Indian history. A study of social life of the people, under the great Mughals, was a long felt need in our historical studies. Besides, on social history, pioneering works have already been done by eminent historians and these works have inspired others to go deep into the subjects. My work is a scientific study in some respects of social life of people under the great Mughals.¹⁵ The history of the Mughals has a practical value to the people of India and there is no difference in the Indian society during Babar’s time and today, which is roughly divided into Hindus and Muslims, who form its main pillars.¹⁶

Hinduism and Islam flowed together like two streams during this period, almost on parallel lines and, at times, these streams met together and again differed. Thus, an account of various meeting grounds between Islam and

13 John Ovington, *A Voyages to Surat in The Year 1689*, (ed.) H. G. Rawlinson (London Press 1929), pp. 1 -9.

14 William Norris, *The Norris Embassy to Aurangzeb (1699 -1702)*, rearranged by S. C Sarkar, Calcutta. 1959, pp. 53 -56.

15 Ibid., p. VII.

16 S.S. Kulshreshtha, *The Development of Trade and industries under the Great Mughals*, p. 54.

Hinduism and, on account of centuries of mutual contact, it is quite possible that the one might have influenced the other. There was much of give and take as well as mutual borrowing between the two and by the inevitable assimilation process of “give and take”. If Islam influenced the Hindu’s life and living, the religion and philosophy of Hinduism influenced Islamic life and thought. So, under the great Mughals, Hindus and Muslims came closer and learnt to appreciate each others’ good points in a congenial atmosphere created by the fair and liberal policies of Akbar. The closer proximity of Islam and Hinduism led to the rapid growth in the sphere of the social and cultural activities including art, architecture, sculpture, painting, music and literature etc., flourished and touched the new heights during the period under study.¹⁷

The real history of the people in Mughal India, that is of their social life and economic condition, particularly, (society and economy in Mughal India). The sources for studying it are, indeed, meagre, but valuable information can be gleaned from the accounts of contemporary European (British) travellers and records of the English Factories; and incidental references are available in contemporary historical works in Persian as well as vernacular literature of the period.¹⁸ It is difficult to draw a line between social and economic history, certain subjects such as trade, handicrafts, urbanism, social formation, mode of production belong to both branches. Handicrafts, for example, have to be viewed not only for their place in economy but also in art and in other themes, but for the sake of convenience one has to draw a line which sometimes becomes arbitrary.¹⁹

The division of mankind into groups based on fundamental differences in disposition, capacity and character, is a common feature all over the world. The Hindus, as today, were divided into castes four varnas, *brahmans*, *kshatriyas*, *vaishyas* and the *shudras*, each of which, in turn, is divided into innumerable sub-castes or sects. “Between 1000 and 2000 different castes and sub-castes

17 Murray, T. Titus, *Indian Islam*, Humphrey Milford, 1930, p. 30.

18 R. C. Mujumdar, *An Advanced History of India*. Delhi, 1976, p. 559.

19 R.S. Sharma, *Survey of Research in Economic and social History of India*, New Delhi, 1986, p. (i).

are recognized in India, and these can be arranged more or less in a scale of social precedence each having its own status, its own rights and duties and its own rules and ceremonials".²⁰

All over India, we can trace the gradual and almost insensible transformation of tribes into castes. The main agency of work is fiction.²¹ In the earlier age's right from the Epic times, the *Brahmins* were in-charge of intellect and conscience, the *Kshatriyas* were in-charge of protection of life and prosperity, the *Vaisyas* were in-charge of commerce and the *Sudras* rendered menial services.²²

"The barriers among the minor sub-division are very formidable and insurmountable: the caste system is based upon two principles i.e. the doctrine of *Karma*, and the religious unity of the family".²³ Al-Baruni writes that the gates of higher learning were closed to all persons who were not of the twice-born castes – Brahmins or Rajputs. The recitation of the Vedas, saying prayer and offering sacrifices to the fire were forbidden to a Vaisya and a Sudra. The violation of these customs was punished by cutting off the tongue.²⁴ Tavernier observed that the Hindus were five or six times more numerous than the Muslims and had no unity among them. According to him, the four castes mentioned in the scriptures split into seventy two castes.²⁵ In the early part of the 17th century in Gujarat, the vaisyas alone were divided into about 85 different sub-castes "that don't eat with one another".²⁶

India has been the home of a rich and varied civilization. It inspired men like Sir William James a noble amphitheater, 'enriched by the vast region of Asia'.

20 Vera Anstey, *The Economic development of India*, p. 48 or S. S. Kulshreshtha, p. 54.

21 Ibid., p. 54.

22 Ain-111-Eng. Tr. Jarret and Sarka, p. 127.

23 Vera Anstey, op. cit., p. 49.

24 Al Bruni, *India II*, Edited by Professor E.S. Sanchat, p. 137.

25 Tavernier Travels, pp. 385-87.

26 Hamilton, *Account of the East Indies I*, p. 248.

Professor Hukley expressed that the geographical environment which was constituted by nature as a “diamond on a pack of cards” having its north angle at Ladakh and the south at Cape Comorin, made India the home of a large population with a marked diversity in their social customs and religious practices, but the unifying factor of a common country shaped them into a distinct cultural entity from the rest of the world. Their social and cultural history shows a remarkable unity. It demonstrates the superior genius of the Indian people to conserve all that they have in the material and spiritual fulfilment of life. Their past achievements and failings are still preserved in their social organization, religious rites and ceremonies, in the legends of their literature and on the monuments of their arts and architecture. The typical Indian mentality its conservative social outlook, its dread of foreign contacts, pride in things rooted in the native soil, together with an aggressive cultural consciousness, has not undergone any vital change.

In respect of marriage, Bernier tells us that inter-caste marriage was forbidden among the four traditional social groups.²⁷ The social institutions of marriage, family and customs related to them have remained more or less the same throughout the medieval and modern periods. The Hindus considered marriage, a sacred and necessary obligation of life and it is pointed out that in the higher groups, infidelity to marriage was rare.²⁸ Pelsaert says that on account of the system of child marriage, grown-up maidens were not found in Hindu society and if old men married they had to marry young girls.²⁹ No one marries but in his own trade or profession; and this custom is observed almost as rigidly by the Mohammedans as by the Hindus

The food and drinking habits of Emperors, nobles and people at large have been enumerated. The food grain like wheat, Barley and rice were grown in plenty, and also narrates about the bazaars which were common for buying and selling. There were ‘pend houses’ which sold provisions like bread and floor –

27 Hamilton, Account of the East Indies, - I, p. 248.

28 Tavernier, op. cit., p. 437, Manucci, op. cit. III, p. 54.

29 Pelsaert, op. cit., p. 84.

cakes made of sugar, fruits and other things. Sugar and sugar-candy were exported from India. Flesh of animals was also in plenty.

Wine drinking was a common feature in Mughal India. The Mughal Emperors, with a very few exceptions, were fond of liquors. The same was true of the Mughal nobility. Jahangir's officer relished wine and some of them even died of excessive drinking. Despite Shahjahn's orders for the prohibition and sale of wine the royal princes and the nobles found it too hard to resist drinking. While trying to enforce prohibition, Aurangzeb's sensor of public morals had to encounter opposition from the ministers, themselves. Drinking became a general habit with his sons and officers.

The evil was prevalent among the people as well. With certain exceptions, both Hindus and Muslims enjoyed wine drinking in the 17th century. It also narrates different drugs which were given to their women friends by men to have greater sensual pleasures.

The houses of the common people in India, according to Manucci, were constructed of earth and pieces of wood bound together with ropes. They lacked any sort of architectural style. The wooden posts served as supporting pillars and roofs were thatched. In the building of the entire house not a single nail was ever used by them. The floors in the houses were not paved with stones, but were made only of pounded earth "Spread over with a wash of cow's dung." The great majority of people in the country used this floor as their bedding and had no other mattress to lie upon.

Like Manrique, Bernier, Tavernier, Thevenot and Careri, Manucci emphasis that the Hindu well-to-do classes did not lag behind their Muslim counterparts in the richness and variety of their dishes which, of course, were mostly vegetarian viz. different kinds of cooked rice, bread, ghee (or butter) sweetmeats, fruits, vegetable and plenty of sugar and sags of numerous varieties. Unlike Marinque Bernier and Careri, Manucci does not give any separate description of the kitchen of Muslim aristocracy which, generally, seems to have tried to imitate the Tastes and dishes of the royal kitchen.

pCHAPTER – 1

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

In some respects the most valuable information regarding the contemporary mode of social existence during the periods under review is to be found in accounts of European visitors, particularly, the Britishers. These travellers, who came from different countries at different times and moved about with intellectual curiosity, recorded their impression about Indian social life with considerable objectivity.

The structure of society, in a nation or a region, consists of the classes of people with their family structure as one of the institutions besides economic, political, caste, religion and occupation considerations. When we use the term social structure in India, it is appropriate to start with the term itself. What kinds of social structure we had during the 16th and the 17th century in 'India'.¹ Rushbrook William's testimony holds good regarding the Mughal age when he says that "the beginning of the 16th century in India as elsewhere is thus a period of transition and in order that it may become intelligible it must be looked at in the light of the conditions out of which it has taken shape". It is quite a known phenomenon that India has been assimilating every odd with temporary resistance. Social change being slow, the structure of society in Mughal India was hardly different from that of the early 15th century". The structure of society in Mughal India has been discussed as under:

HINDU SOCIETY

In other communities, generally, the principal factors determining class and status are wealth, pedigree, or profession. In the case of the Hindus, however, membership of caste is determined by birth.² The institution of caste is

1 K.C. Panchandikar, *Determinants of Social Structure and Social Change in India and Other Papers*, Bombay, p. 18.

2 *The Legacy of India* ed. by G. T. Garratt, Oxford, 1962, p. 124.

a unique feature of the Hindu society, and nothing exactly like it is to be found in the other part of the world.³ The word Varna really means colour, and, therefore, the division of society was made on the basis of colour.⁴ According to ancient Hindu law or scriptures, they (Varna) remained the backbone of the Hindu society and were considered the age old belief of worldly and spiritual well-being of the Hindu society as an essential part.⁵ In view of the widely accepted current belief, based on later Brahmanical literature, {A late hymn (X. 90)} of the Rigveda known as Purusha –Sukta, says that when the Gods divided Purusha (the primeval giant or creator), “the Bramana was his mouth; the Rajanya (Kshtrya) was his arms; the Vaisya was his thighs; the Sudra sprung from his feet.”⁶

Manusmriti or Manavadharamsastra is an influential sacred text of the Hindu tradition. It is said to have been the work of the Sage, Manu considered as the father of mankind. It is also a guide for the four stages of life daily's routines, sacraments marriage and Sraddha. It laid on the duties of four castes -To Brahmin, he (Manu) assigned teaching and studying (Veda), sacrificing for their own benefit and for others, giving and accepting of alms. Kashtriya, he commanded to protect the people to, bestow gifts, to other sacrifices, to study (the Veda), and to abstain from attaching himself to sensual pleasures. The Vaisya was commanded to tend cattle, to offer services to lend money to trade, and to cultivate land. The Lord prescribed only one occupation to the Sudra, namely to serve merely the three castes. They remained the cardinal feature of the Hindu Society. Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas were all divided and sub divided in innumerable castes and sub castes or the *Jatis* formed an endogamous group and it was only in this endogamous group that inter-dining was permissible. Thus, it was not so much the caste that affected a man in all the major aspects of his life as the particular sub-caste to which he belonged. Restrictions on marriage and food and occupation distinguished and defined his

3 Jogendra Nath Bhattacharya, *Hindu Castes and Sects*, Calcutta, 1896, p. 2.

4 Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Sub-continent*, Netherlands, 1962, p. 21.

5 Pushpa Suri, *Social Conditions in Eighteenth Century Northern India*, Delhi, 1977, p. 24.

6 *The Vedic Age*. Vol. I. ed. by R.C Majumdar. Bombay. Fifth edition. 988. P. 388

social status and laid down the specific code for his social behaviour.⁷ Manu observes that the very birth of Brahman is an eternal incarnation of the sacred law for he is born to the sacred law, and becomes one with Brahman.

BRAHMAN: A Brahman, coming into existence, is born as the highest on earth, the lord of all created beings, for the protection of the treasury of the law. Whatever exists in the world is the property of the Brahmana, on account of the excellence of his origin the Brahmana is indeed entitled to it all.⁸ Alberuni noticed that the highest castes are the Brahmana of whom the books of the Hindus tell that they were created from the Mouth of Brahman. And as Brahman is only another name for the force called nature, and the head is the highest part of the animal body, the Brahmana are the choice part of the whole genus. Therefore, the Hindus consider them as the very best of mankind.⁹ Religion was the exclusive monopoly of the Brahmana. He not only administered the religious needs of the people but also stood like an intermediary between God and man. Alberuni tells us that only the Brahmans and Kshatriyas could learn the Vedas, and therefore, moksha was meant for them alone.¹⁰

Keshava, an important Hindi poet of 17th century, has also thrown a good deal of light on the composition of the Hindu society. Keshava and other Braj writers have provided us valuable information regarding the civic and cultural life of the period under study. This includes information about social stratification, food habits, towns, games, amusements, festivals, customs ceremonies and superstitions. He (Keshav) has mentioned four-fold divisions of (*Hindu*) society in line with the traditional social structure. At the top came the *Brahmans* whose main business was the study of scriptures and to look after the religious life of the people. They occupied the highest position in the social life of the society. Then came the *Kshatriyas*, who formed the sword arm of the society. Their main

7 Alexander Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies*, (ed) William Foster, London, 1930, 1, ,. 90.

8 *The Law of Manu*, Ch. X, Sec. 3, Quoted in *sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXV, ed., F. Max Muller, Oxford, 1886, pp. 25-26.

9 Alberuni's India I, (Sa Sachau), p. 100.

10 K.A. Nizami, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India During the Thirteenth Century*, Bombay, 1961, p. 68.

concern was to protect the country and they occupied respectable position in the society. Then came *Vaishyas* who looked after the economic needs of the people. Their main business was farming and trade. The last role on the social ladder was performed by people whose job was to serve the upper three classes. They were known as *Sudras*.¹¹

Foreign visitors to India were sometimes keen observers and accurate recorders of events and occurrences in India. Linschoten, a Dutch traveler, has also given an eloquent testimony regarding Brahamans whom he describes to be the most honest and esteemed among all the castes of India. They used to serve in important places with the ruling monarch in various capacities. They were also priests and ministers in their temples. Tavernier writes in his travels in India that Brahmans generally, occupy themselves in the reading of the books and they are so skilled in their observations that they do not make a mistake of a minute in foretelling the eclipse of the sun and the moon. The priests and ministers of law are selected from among them.

KSHATRIYAS: The Kshatriyas came next in the social hierarchy.¹² Kshatriyas were those who form the sword of the society. Their main concern was to protect the country and they occupied respectable position in the society. The Kshatriyas read and learnt the Vedas, but did not teach them. According to Puranic rites, the Kshatriyas had apparently ceased to make any contribution to the progress or preservation of Indian culture. But their political prospects were improving.¹³ The Kshatriyas must fill the hearts with terror, must be brave and highminded, must have ready speech and a liberal hand, not minding dangers, only intent upon carrying the great tasks of his calling to a happy end.¹⁴ Alberuni, however, seems to have overrated the facts, precisely because he drew them upon Hindu Smritis rather than the actual conditions prevailing in the

11 Bindu Bij, *Society and Economy During the 16th Century As Reflected in Contemporary Braja Literature*, 1985

12 Ibid., p. 69.

13 *Journal of the Aligarh Historical Research Institute*, Vol. I, July-October, 1941, Nos. 2 and 3, p. 81.

14 Alberuni's India I, (Sa Sachau), p. 103.

11th century.¹⁵ It is no wonder that he ignored the Rajputs, their rise being a later development. The hereditary occupation of the Kshatriyas was to wield temporal power.¹⁶ The kings, ministers and soldiers, generally, belonged to this caste. Hindu poets quoted that they were greedy and selfish; they never did good to anybody and were not compassionate. If they saw a beautiful woman in the house of a poor man, their strength of arm lay only in their efforts to grab her for themselves.

In a contemporary Gujarati work, we find references to thirty six social divisions among the Rajputs, most important among them being Vats, Vaja, Jethur, Chudrsabha, Rathor, Parmar, Chauhan, Saulanki, Padihar, Chavada, Tuwar, Yadava, Zala, Guhil etc.

VAISYA: The vaisya was engaged in agriculture, pastoral pursuits, industry, and trade, and paid tribute to the king and the nobles, in return for the protection given to them. Rich Vaisyas had acquired wealth in trade or agriculture and were probably, the headmen of guilds. The money lending was also a flourishing business of theirs¹⁷. As we know, Alberuni studied the Hindu caste system prevailing in the early years of the 11th century. At that time, he also studied Kayasthas (one of the subcaste of Vaisya) as a notable caste as the original Hindu shastras have made no mention of them.¹⁸ In the 11th and the following centuries, individual of this caste rose to the highest public offices in different tracts. Evidences of the ascendancy of Srivastava Kayasthas are found not only in Bengal, Sravasti and Kashmir, but also throughout the length and breadth of India.¹⁹

SUDRA: The Sudra was the servile class and comprised the mass of the people. "The Sudra caste was by far more numerous than all the other classes put together and comprised the artisan and the labourer of every kind".²⁰ The

15 A. L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, Agra. 1964, pp. 20-21.

16 Ibid., p. 21.

17 R. C. Majumdar, *Ancient India*, Reprint. Delhi. 1982. p. 48 -49.

18 Nagendra Nath Vasu's *A Short History of the Indian Kayastha*, Calcutta, 1915, pp. 43-45.

19 P. Ojha, *Some Aspects of North Indian Social Life, 1000-1526 AD*, Calcutta, 1973, p. 10.

20 Craford, op. Cit., p. 117.

Sudras included the aborigines admitted to the Hindu community. Their salvation was supposed to lie in the direct and indirect service rendered by them to the three upper classes.

Alberuni further says, after the Sudra follow people called *Antyaja*, who performed various kinds of services, who are not reckoned amongst any caste, but only as members of a certain crafts or professions. There are eight classes of them, who freely inter-marry with each other. *Moreland* also highlighted the plight of the weavers, who themselves naked, toiled to clothe others. The peasants, hungry themselves, toiled to field to feed the unproductive population of towns and cities. While India, as a whole, parted with useful commodities in exchange for gold and silver "or in other words gave bread for stones."²¹ When the supplies of food failed often, the hope of salvation of the masses was the slave –traders, and the alternatives were cannibalism, suicide or starvation. The administrative method in vogue barred the way of any escape from this system for they "penalized production, and regarded every indication of increased consumption as a signal of fresh extortion."²² The reign of Jahangir and Shahjahan were characterized, primarily, by the extension and intensification of these methods. Thus, at the close of the period under review, the economic system of India was leading towards collapse.²³ The demands made by the various governments on producers, both in the North and the South were so exorbitant that without exaggeration it could be said "that administrative activities were the most important factors in the distribution of the national income." Their impact was to leave to producers very little, if anything, "above the minimum required for their subsistence, and to offer the surplus in reward to energy or ingenuity exerted in unproductive ways." There was thus a diversion of energy from productive to unproductive pursuits. While the low standard of life and the small spending powers of people were facts established by direct evidence, "a

21 W.H.Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, Delhi, 1972. p.5.

22 Ibid.

23 According to *J.F.Richards*, "the 17th century crises in South Asia" modern Asian studies, October 1990, the greater part of the 17th century "was a period Of moderate, a new level of peace, order and stability throughout most of the subcontinent. Only at the turn of the century we do find political crises, warfare, disease, and economic disruption accompanying the descending spiral of imperial decline" p -625.

relatively large number of producers constituted half their gross income to the support of their relatively small number of economic parasites.”²⁴ The Hindus are becoming justly proud of the momentuous achievements of their forefathers not only in the field of religion and philosophy but also on the various secular fronts of social life, and are, naturally, fired with a remarkable zeal for unearthing the buried past and arriving at correct findings regarding the ancient and medieval history of India²⁵.

MUSLIM SOCIETY

The system of stratification among Indian Muslims is comparable to the Hindu Caste System, but there is no exact similarity between the two. *Imtiaz Ahmad* notes that “certain basic features of caste like endogamy, occupational specialisation and hierarchy exist among Indian Muslims. Islam is a monotheistic religion. Besides monotheism it lays stress on *equality* and *brotherhood* in faith. It emphasizes the importance of piety and devotion rather than *birth* or *colour* as criterion for greatness and nearness to God. Nobility of descent and pride in the purity of blood were ingrained in the social consciousness of the Arabs. *Prophet Mohammad* directed his attention towards the establishment of a new society of equals. Rank in this new society had to be determined not by aristocratic descent but by the degree of faith and piety. The most deviant of the believers is the most worthy in the sight of *God*, says the *Quranic text*.

The Muslims were divided into the Sunnis, the Shias, the Bohras and Khojas (mostly in Gujarat) by their religious beliefs. To each variety of Islam, others were heterodox. But the Sunnis formed the great majority of the officially recognized faithful in Mughal India. Racially, the Muslims were divided as Turks (in India called Mughals), Afghans, Persians, Sayyids and Indian converts to Islam. The last variety, comprising of Indian Muslims outnumbered the first four classes, but was not as influential. Many converts to Islam hovered on the branches of Hinduism and Islam. Some like Rajput converts, greatly still retained

24 W. H. Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, Delhi, 1972.p –300. -301-303-304.

25 “*The Cultural Heritage of India*” Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Memorial, vol II Belur Math Calcutta. (N. D.) P. 611.

their class affinities with the corresponding groups in Hindus from which they had sprung by occupation. Hindus and Muslims came together in the Mughal camp and the public places. The masses fraternized in the local fairs held in various places round some object of local worship or veneration. A Living Saint monument, the tomb of the dead one, was raised to a local sect, or a place said to be connected with some mythological Hero of the past. Wherever or whoever was capable of working a miracle became an object of veneration, if not worship. Though the Muslims considered the Hindus Kafirs and the Hindus retaliated by calling them untouchables, a kind of state of stable equilibrium had come to be established between the two parts of population in the wake of Akbar's religious policy.²⁶

Aurangzeb's reign disturbed this equilibrium but he favoured Sunnis only; the other class of Muslims became, along with Hindus, the persecutors. The Mughal emperor rules without any effective check on their authority. In theory, they were only servants of the law, the Muslim law (Shariat). They could neither supersede it nor mould it. But in actual practice this was true of personal law of the Muslim alone. The emperors could not force Muslims in their private relations with one another to follow any other law. The political officers –the Qazi's were appointed to administer the Muslim law among the Muslims. The Hindus were governed by their own customs or Hindu law. Thus, in actual practice, the Muslim system of administration never took roots in India i.e. in countries like Persia, Afghanistan or Egypt, where the entire population was converted to Islam –the Muslim rulers objected to be obliged. Incorporate pre-Muslim customs of the country in the organization of the government. But in India where the large number of masses refused to accept Islam, it was little more difficult to organize the government according to Muslim law. Thus, in actual practice, the Muslim system of administration, uniformly prevalent in all other Muslim lands, never took root in India. The practices of the first four Khalifas were exulting by the Muslim fundamentalists as the Muslim polity. But the Shia's reacted violently to it. Thus, the Mughal emperors felt themselves at liberty to undertake things as they pleased, provided what they did was not, actually, opposed by Quran.

26 Sri Ram Sharma, *Religious Policy of the Mughals*, Bombay. 1957.p. 7.

The Muslim society also was subject to a kind of division. The foreign Muslims e.g. *the Arabs, the Turks and the Persians* occupied the position of rulers from the very start; being in the highest positions in the government and the army, they were superior to the local converts. The new converts remained attached to their beliefs and customs. Consequently, today, Muslims of two types can be found. (1) *SHARIFZAT* – (*high caste*) and (2) “*AZLA*” (*low caste*). These names have a certain social and historical basis. Of the two terms – *Sayyed* and *Shaikh*, both of which imply *Arbian* origin, *Sayyed* is used inclusively for the descendants of the *Prophet's* family through his daughter *Fatimah* and *Shaikh* is used for those of *Arab* origin, but not related to the *Prophet's* family. At the top of society were the *Ashrafs* or the Muslim elites. The nobles and rich merchants of *Arab or Persian* origin formed part of the Muslim elite. Prominent among the *Ashrafs* were *Qazis (Judes)* who possessed sufficient expertise in Islamic law to arbitrate disputes involving fellow Muslims. Below them in status were the *Mullas* (ordinary preachers). *Socially*, distinct from the *Ashrafs* were the Muslim urban artisans. They were organized into separate endogamous communities (*Jati*) with the distinctive occupations parallel to organization of Hindu Society. Mukanderam, while writing about classification of the Muslims, gives a list of fifteen Muslim Jatis who inhabited an ideal Bengali city of his day – *Julahah* – (*weavers*), *Mukari* (live stock holders), *Pithari* (coke sellers), *Kabari* (fish mongers), *The Rangraj* (cloth dyers), *Garasal* (convert from the local population), *Kagaji* (paper-maker), *Sana Kar* (loom-makers), *Hajam* (circumsisers), *Tirakar* (bow-makers), *Kalandar* (wondering holymen), *Darji* (Tailors), *Benata* (weavers of thick cord), so on and so forth. Each of these groups, a professional group was akin to caste.

EMPEROR: It is still somewhat obscure exactly how and when the title of ‘Sultan’ originated. The terms ‘Sultan’ and ‘Sultanat’ are derived from a common root meaning ‘power, authority’, and are generally applied to that form of state which began to prevail in the Islamic world soon after the first four successors of Muhammad, but which was not originally contemplative by the Quran. The

concept of kingship entered Islam as a great contribution but later on Islamic Persists testified it.²⁷

The Delhi Sultan felt shy of using high sounding titles such as the king or emperor. It was from the time of Babur, when he became the ruler of Kabul that the office of the king became more sound and firm, though his ancestors (especially Taimur) did not like to be called as emperor. Babur inherited a theory of kingship that was of combination of ideas of his ancestors, Taimur the Turk and Changej Khan the Mughal. It was in 1507 when he became the ruler of Kabul, that he assumed 'formally' the title of Padshah (King) which helped him in regaining the control over administration as his Psyche underwent a change. He considered himself equal to the Sultan of Turkey, who had adopted the title of khalifa in 1517. Humayun continued to believe like his ancestors that the king was the shadow of God on Earth and it was, consequently, his duty to do within his sphere as God did in relation to his creation. He even thought that he being king was the centre of human world as the sun was of the universe.

Akbar's theory of sovereignty was not the result of speculation. It was born out of hard facts of life, and was the result of his own thought and innate practical common sense. The enunciation of Akbar theory of kingship made by Abul Fazl on behalf of his sovereign for the first time in 1567 was revolutionary in character as one of the essentials of his theory was to inaugurate universal peace and to regard all classes of man and all sects of religion with the single eye of favour.

Abul Fazl then proceeds to define elaborately the perfect man. It must be said, in conclusion, that Akbar's theory is one of the benevolence, and to great extent even enlightened despotism. He believed like the Prussian king Frederick the great of 18th century Germany that he was the first servant of the people and that it was his duty to think and worked hard for their welfare. Infact, his idealism surpassed that of Fredrick in as much as he believed that no religious worship

27 K.M. Asraf, *life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, Delhi, 1969. p. 28.

was better than the service of people. And we find that its practical application gave India peace and unity, progress and prosperity.

The emperor was the leader of the people and the head of the society, enjoying the highest status. He was the most important individual in the realm and was believed to be the richest person in the country. As a ruler as well as the leader of the society, he set the standards of socio-cultural behaviour.²⁸ In Hindustan especially no attempt was made to conceal the position. People had to prostrate themselves before the Sultan of Delhi when he was present, and to stand up even when his name was mentioned as a mark of sole reverence; when at a distance from Delhi, they bowed –towards the seat of the Sultnat. Salutation were offered to the vacant throne, whenever a person passed by it, even to the wooden sandals and quiver put on the throne as the symbol of monarchy.

It is related of the Mughal emperor Humayun, that on the occasion of a public audience, a curtain was drawn before him; the whole gathering exclaimed: 'Behold the illumination of the Divine Being.' The same monarch was similarly credited with possessing super –human powers.

Abul Fazl an eminent historian and the biographer of Akbar has further elaborated the mystic Theory of 'The perfect man' (Insan –I -Kamil), to prove that Akbar had realized the mysteries of human life and was absorbed into the reality like a Yogi.²⁹ The Mughal Padishahs of Hindostan was spent half their time in public. They received petitions and administered justice in public. They gave audiences in open Durbars. They publicly inspected horses, elephants, troops, arms, accoutrements, jewels, decorations, furniture, and animals of all kinds, goods and cattle of every description. They delighted in hunting expeditions; they delighted in public fights between animals and gladiators after the manner of the later Roman emperors, Akbar took great pains in the administration of justice; He was anxious for the welfare of the people. But neither Jahangir, nor Shahjahan

28 K. P. Sahu, *Some Aspects of North-Indian Social Life 1000-1526 AD* Pub. Punthi Pustak, Calcutta, 1973, p. 13.

29 Abul Fazl, *Ain-I-Akbari*, You, translated by H.Blochmann, Delhi 1964 (Reprint).I, p. 5.

cared anything for the people. They were greedy only of flattery and riches. They lavished enormous sums on harem establishments, jewels, palaces, mausoleums, and tented pavilions. Meanwhile they often hoarded up vast sums in the palace vaults of Delhi and Agra.³⁰

The aim of the Mughal Ruler was to be 'continually attentive to the health of the body politic' and to remedy its disease and evils, so as to bring about perfection of life, and assure its happiness, strength and prosperity. The king should accomplish this end by wisely making use of the four classes of men into which society can be divided, viz., warriors, merchants and artificers; the learned men and the husbandmen and laborers, by whose excretions and co operation is ensured the progress and happiness of the 'world', i.e. the kingdom.³¹ The spirit of the Mughal rule was born of the belief that royalty is a light emanating from God..., the Farr -I -izadi (the divine light).... Hence many excellent qualities flow from the possession of this light, of which I. 'a parental attitude towards the subjects', and 2. 'a large heart' are the two foremost, as enumerated by Abul Fazl. Thus the Mughal government – from the time of Akbar, at any rate – was conceived in a spirit of benevolence, and in the attitude of a parent. The king regarded the subjects as his children and, hence, felt himself responsible for their safety, health, happiness and progress.

THE NOBILITY: Immediately below the monarch came his nobles. They usually supported him in power. A noble, generally, began his career as a slave or retainer of the emperor or of another big noble and by his gradual promotions, sometimes; he reached a high office and got the rank of Amir. The highest title of a noble was Khan, next came Malik and lastly Amir. Below them were some military ranks of Sipah Salar.³² The composition of Indian nobility was utterly heterogeneous, viz. Turks, Arabs, Afghans, Persians, Egyptians, Mughals and Indians. The nobility exercised a potent influence in the state as military generals, administrators and also, at times, as King-makers. Almost maximum noblemen of this period were fond of field sports swordsmanship and were

30 J. Talboys Wheeler, *Early records of British India*, London.1878, p.8

31 Ain, (Text) 3-4; Blochmann's Tr. I, Abul Fazl's Preface, pp –IV –V.

32 P. N. Ojha, *Aspects of Medieval Indian Culture*, Ranchi, 1st Edn., p.128.

keenly interested in military exercises.³³ Many among them were renowned patrons of arts and letters and were learned, humble, polite and courteous.³⁴

Many of the nobles established their independent state. Important and powerful nobles tried to emulate the Sultan in every possible way. In the closing year of Sultanate, some of the nobles built mansions as would almost rival the king's palace. The Islamic state fostered luxury among the members of its ruling aristocracy. The acquisition of enormous wealth by the nobility and their participation in the festivities of the royal court led to sinister vices of wine, women, drinking, gambling, and de-bauchery, sometimes of the worst type. But their ways of life did not always sap their vitality. Almost all the noblemen of this period were fond of sports, swordsmanship, and were keenly interested in military exercises. Many among them were renowned patrons of arts and letters and were 'learned, humble, polite and courteous'.³⁵

ULAMA: The Ulama constituted a very influential section of Muslim society. They were held in high esteem on account of religious learning and in many traditions of the Prophet; they referred to as his heirs and are, sometimes, compared to the Prophet of the Drraelites.³⁶ In a survey of Muslim society, Ulmas occupied a commanding place both in secular and religious affairs. The status enjoyed by the Ulamas in Muslim society can be gleaned from the tradition of the Prophet as recorded in the Tarikh a –I –Pakhr –ud –din –Mobarak Shah, that the best kings and the best nobles are those who visit the Doors of the Ulamas and the worst Ulamas are those who visit the door of the Kings and the nobles. The Ulamas are much superior in dignity and status to others, after them rank the kings.³⁷

The Ulamas have been classified by the literature of the Mughal period in the two categories 1. (Ulama –I –Akhirat); they kept themselves aloof from

33 K. S. Lal, *Twilight of the Sultanate*, Bombay, 1963, p. 263.

34 The Rehla of Ibn Battuta, O.I.B. 1953, p. 13.

35 Ibid, p. 13.

36 K. A. Nizami, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India During the Thirteen Century*, Bombay, 1961, p. 150.

37 K. A. Nizami, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics*, p. 150., Tarikh a –I –Pakhr –ud –din –Mobarak Shah, (Eng. Trans.), London. 1927, pp. 9 -11.

worldly greed. 2. The (Ulama –I –Duniya); they were expert in explaining away their irresponsible statements and actions. Their highest ambition of life was to become Sadar –I –Jahan. They acquired knowledge for the worldly gains. At times, the influence of the Ulamas was on the wane due to the policy and attitude of the reigning sovereign. Once, Sikandar Lodhi threatened to destroy a temple and a tank of Kurukshetra where the Hindus used to go for a Holy dip. Ulamas were consulted over this matter. Mian Abdullah of Ajodhyan supported the case of the Hindus as it was against the spirit of Islam to interfere with their ancient right. Mian Abdullah was threatened with death penalty for his view. At last, the Sultan had to bow before his Fatwa.³⁸

It is natural if the people expected Ulamas to be chaste, truthful, serene, and afraid of moral turpitude, scrupulously observing the Shariat and Sunnah and free from all worldly grade. "They believed, when an illiterate man dies his sins also die with him, but when an *alim* dies his sins outlive him".³⁹ To sum up, the class of Ulamas consisted of men both of liberal and narrow views, of spiritual and mundane outlook. Learned men, true to the spirit of Islam and Fearless enough to risk their lives in speaking the truth, were not rare

SUFI-SAINTS: One of the important sections of this class was composed of the *sufi-saints* and *darweshes*, who were spread all over the country, wielding great influence and maintaining intimate touch with the common people. Reverence for these saints almost bordered on worship. Rich and poor, high and low, men and women all became their disciples. Their Khanqas were the meeting grounds of scholars, nobles and commoners, respected by Kings and commoners alike, these Sufi saints played a significant role in the country. Kings and nobles, generally, made liberal grants to these holy men, but the true saints among them shunned all offers of gift or service.⁴⁰

38 Tarkh –I –Daudi, pp. 29 -30.

39 Op., cit., K. A. Nizmi, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics*, p. 151.

40 *The Rehla* of Ibn Battuta, O.I.B. 1953, p. 70.

SLAVES

Although references to slavery are found in Rigveda, the earliest references to slave trade occur in Jatakas.⁴¹ The period between 7th century BC and 2nd century AD is known for brisk trade in slaves from a number of sources both, indigenous and foreign. Strabo says “that the king was waited upon by women purchased from their parents”. Periplus mentions that beautiful girls for royal harems, as also slaves, were imported from Baragaza. He also mentions the export of women slaves from India to Socotra. Thus at least in the time of the author (1st AD), one of the important articles of the sea borne trade was human cargo.⁴²

The wars waged by the Arabs and Turk invaders led to the capture of numerous prisoners who were often reduced to slavery and, sometimes, robbers sold their captives as slaves.⁴³ The slave, as a commodity of trade, can be divided into two main categories on the basis of their sex and functions. Biologically, they belonged to the male or the female or the third category of eunuchs. We find several references to trade in the first (male) category of the slaves in indigenous literature. While some Muslim accounts mention trade in female slaves. The import of the eunuchs for royal harems is known from Muslim accounts also.⁴⁴ According to the *Encyclopaedia of Religion And Ethics*, “The most generally accepted definition of slavery is that it is a social system in which one person is the property of another”⁴⁵.

Domestic slaves can again be sub-divisible into two types, those for household purposes and those for luxury purposes. The duties of the purchased slave girls as enumerated in the forms of documents are cutting of (vegetables), pulverizing (spices), smearing the floor (with cow dung), sweeping, bringing water and fuel, throwing away human excreta of her master’s family, milking the

41 Jatakas, I, pp. 224-229, Jatakas Tr. Fausboll, London, 1962, pp. 285, 546.

42 Mukherjee, S. *Some Aspects of Social Life in Ancient India*, Allahabad, 1976, p. 175; Rawlinson, *Intercourse Between India and the Western World*, p. 47.

43 Elliot and Dawson, *The History of India*, Vol. II, Allahabad, 1969, pp. 26, 50, 58, 230-31.

44 Elliot and Dowson, vol. III, p.118; K. M. Ashraf, *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, p. 188.

45 J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion And Ethics*, p. 595.

cow, buffalo, goat, churning curd, bringing grass for fodder, weeding and cutting grass and other household works. Earlier, rules as laid down in the Arthasastra, show that causing a slave girl to remove dead bodies, urine, the remains of food, hurting or abusing her, or asking her to attend on the master while he was bathing naked involved the forfeiture of the price paid for her. The use of slave girls as concubines had been prevalent since very early times. We find references to younger age slave girls of white complexion, sixteen years old and with pleasing and auspicious limbs. In another document, the slave girl is described as having black eyes, a sharp nose, and long hair, with all her limbs in proper form. Obviously slave girls were purchased for the sexual pleasure also.⁴⁶

The slave as a commodity of trade is also referred to in certain Indian inscriptions. A record dated in kali year 4431, falling in the reign of the Hoyasala king Viraballaba (1173 AD), mentions the tax of 2 Kasu for one slave. Some other inscriptions of South India also specify slaves as articles on which toll was charged.⁴⁷

It was the attitude of early Dharmasāstras that the first two varnas (Brahmana and Kshatriya) should not trade in human beings. It was also laid down in these smritis that a Brahmana or Kshatriya who indulges in slave trading automatically becomes a vasiya in seven days.⁴⁸ According to the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, "The most generally accepted definition of slavery is that it is a social system in which one person is the property of another."⁴⁹ Manucci writes that "It is the habit of these kings to have usually in their service several thousand slaves of different nations and some among them are established as chiefs to govern and guide the rest. They are all gentlemen troupers and have good pay.... They have various employments both within the household and in other duties connected with it. In addition, they are used as spies to report what is going on as well among the nobles as the common people".⁵⁰

46 L. Global, *Economic life of Northern India*, p. 80.

47 Epigraphiacarnatica VIII, Sorab, 237 or Nellore Insitutions III. on gole, 132, 213 of 1918.

48 Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 39th Session, Osmania University, Hyderabad, 1978, p. 132.

49 N. Manucci, *Storia De Mogor*, tr. By W. Irvine, London, 1907, ii, p. 80.

50 Ibid., pp. 357-58.

The nobles followed the practice of keeping slaves and slave-girls in their households as the desire to show off, marked the character of this period. The harem of every nobleman was a replica of the royal house and abounded in eunuchs, slaves and slave-girls. On a lower level, they helped the ladies or performed the entire household duties including the cooking. They could be exploited to any extent, but, generally, they were well treated as in this case the owner's reputation was at stake and not very often the slaves took advantage of it. About these common slaves and domestic servants Manucci has made a very interesting and quite a justifiable observation, "Verily it produces desperation to be dependent on the men and women slaves of India. In them there is no goodness; they are full of malice, generally thieves, false, traitors, deniers, slothful, loquacious; incapable of secrecy, devoid of love and fidelity, for ever complaining of their masters. Treat them tenderly as your children and they behave the worse and to get any work done, you must act against them harshly and make them do their duty by force. They serve you by fear of blows and not from duty or love. The free servants are just the same. Servants leave their master soldiers on their campaigns. If any of these soldiers are in any degree well served, it is because they are accompanied by a wife and some Negro women, with whom the servants have intrigues and through this attraction follow him".⁵¹

Among the domestics, both male and female, there were many slaves till the end of the 18th century in North Bihar, Bengal and Assam, indeed, everywhere along the northern frontier. The sale of debtors (not being Muhammedans) seems to have been a common practice in Muhammedan countries. As per Manrique's statement that the Government of the province would seize the wives and children of those cultivators who could not pay off the revenue, made them into slaves and sold them by auction.⁵² Hamilton mentions that he was, himself, empowered to sell up the families of his creditors in Thatta

51 Ibid., pp. 447-48.

52 Fray Sebastian Manrique, *Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique*, 2 Vols., English translation and Edited by Father H. Hasten, Oxford, 1927, Vol. II deals with India. Vol. I, p. 53.

without going to court.⁵³ Famine and epidemic caused indebtedness which thus, was responsible for a considerable amount of slavery that was normally in existence. Slaves of male sex were called *Golams* or *Nafars*, and the women called *Laundis*. Slaves were employed not merely as domestic but also as agricultural workers.

At the beginning of the 17th century the majority of the inhabitants of Goa were described as slaves.⁵⁴ Surprisingly, there is a mention of rich ladies who were keeping a number of slaves under them with valuable jewels, they received the same pay as the other slaves and were under their orders, and each had, under her, about ten women over whom she ruled.⁵⁵ The slaves were regarded by some as the lowest classes in society making out a precarious existence. Although these people made no distinction of "Meat and drinks", though they had full reverence for the cow and therefore never touched beef.⁵⁶ Female slaves were of two kinds, viz. (a) Those employed for domestic and menial services, and (b) those purchased for pleasure and company and the latter, naturally, had more honourable and sometimes even a dominating position in the royal as well as aristocratic households. Their prices varied in accordance with their personal charm, sociability and physical fitness.⁵⁷ A slave was, generally, a prisoner of war, or born of slave parents and his life was at the mercy of the master who exercised full powers of life and death over him. Thus, a slave was not a free agent in the eyes of the law of the land and had no rights, whatsoever. The institution of slavery might have served some useful purposes to the Sultans and their nobles, but it did produce certain baneful social effects. It had, certainly, a stamp of unprogressiveness and was an unhealthy feature of our social life.⁵⁸

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- 53 Alexander Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies, being Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton*, Edited by William Foster, London, 1930. vol. I, p. 121.
- 54 Radha Kamal Mukerjee, *The Economic History of India 1600-1800*, pp 23-24, contd. P-5.
- 55 Ibid. p-336.
- 56 William Hedges, *The Diary of Sir William Hedges During His Agency in Bengal* 3 Vols., Edited by R. Barlow and Henry Yule, London, 1887-90. II, p. 314.
- 57 P. N. Ojha, *Aspects of Medieval Indian Culture*, Ranchi, 1st Edn. 1961, pp. 133-134.
- 58 Ibid., p. 134.

Hindu noblemen and chiefs began to employ slaves for military and domestic purposes. Even public women in Deccan began to employ slaves for attendance and service. As late as the close of the last century, slavery existed in the native states of Rajputana as it did probably in earlier periods,⁵⁹ In Mewar, apart from agricultural bondage, *baral*, which is redeemable slavery, existed in other forms, the slaves being usually known as *golas*, probably Gulam or Dases. The *Golas* were the general body of slaves who had lost their liberty and the *Dases*, (literally slaves). The illegitimate sons of ruling Princes had no rank or legal position in the State, though they were to provide to the Raja. The marriages of slaves (both *Golas* and *Dases*) were confined to those of their own class. Their offspring were also slaves, generally esteemed in public according to the quality of the mother – if she was a Rajputni, a Muslim or one of the degraded tribes, with the familiar advantages or disadvantages of a caste. The slaves also formed a caste of their own, which took away part of the social stigma. *Tod* bears testimony to the fact that they were well treated in the war and even held confidential positions about the chiefs whose body they were: Their distinguishing mark was the wearing of a silver ring found in the left ankle.⁶⁰

It creates, in the long run, an offensive and brutal upper class on the one hand and a bitter and vindictive lower class on the other. Similarly, a long tradition of slavery creates a set of persons born to work that others may not think. Another obvious inference from this unhealthy division of classes is that manual labour becomes identified with slave labour and, therefore, discredited. Thus, we conclude on the basis of sources that the institution of slavery remained a powerful institution with different shades in medieval times.

Foreign travellers who visited India during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries present a picture of small group in the ruling class living a life of great ostentation and luxury, in short contrast to the miserable condition of the masses – the peasants, the artisans and the domestic attendants.

59 K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, Delhi, 1970, p. 104.
60 Tod James. *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, ed. by W. Crooke- I, pp 207-210

Upper Class (Rulers, Nobles, Aristocrats etc.)

Middle Class (Officials, Agriculturists and Merchants etc.)

Lower Class (Peasants, Artisans, Labourers and Slaves etc.)

Moreland referred to the utter rigidity of the caste system of the Hindus.⁶¹ He classified the economic life of Indian population at the time of Akbar's death into two groups, The consuming classes consisting of (1) The court and the Imperial service. (II) The professional and religious classes, including merchants and ascetics, and (III) Domestic servants and slaves. The producing class, were engaged in (I) Agriculture (II) Industry (III) Commerce. The discussion rounded off with an analysis of the standard of life and the wealth of India and its distribution. During the Mughal period the society can be classified broadly into three groups viz. Upper, Middle and Lower.

UPPER CLASS: The classification is made on the basis of the royal family at the top of the social and political order as a separate entity. The ruling class of Emperors, those from royal families, other nobles and aristocrats constituted the major chunk of the upper class in Mughal India. The Mughal rulers were proud of their origin from *Changez Khan* and *Timur*. All the powers of the masses were surrendered to the divine representative, the king or the Emperor. The Emperor enjoyed a unique position in social structural hierarchy. *Khutba* was read and *coins* were stricken at the time of Emperor's ascending the throne.

The British travellers have given a useful testimony about the wealthy status of the Mughal rulers (from Akbar onwards) and their patronage to the various arts. They on several occasions, have given a vivid description of the luxurious life of the rulers and the nobles as they attired themselves in costly dresses, ate a variety of rich food, drank costly wine and lived in the palatial houses. The food of the upper class consisted of *Branj* (dressed rice), *aeshalia* (spiced meat), *Pollaeb* (Pulao), *zuyela* (spiced wheaten cakes), *dupaiza*, also roasted meat and various other good courses, served on very large dishes.

⁶¹ Op., cit., W.H. Moreland, India at the Death of Akbar; p -21.

Fruits of different varieties were also regularly eaten by the nobles.⁶² Manucci, a European traveller who spent a life-time in India, describes various aspects of the social life of Indian Mughal Emperors. He describes Aurangzeb's costly kitchen, which according to him as not lavish, was not without delicious dishes.

The upper class in Mughal India consisted of the nobles, the autonomous chiefs and rajas and the wealthy merchants in the towns. The Mughal nobles received salaries which were, probably, the highest in the world at that time. In addition to their personal (Zat) salaries, the nobles were allowed considerable profits on payments of salaries to their soldiers (*tabinan*), some nobles engaged in trade and so augmented their income. Some again, put their money out on interest to merchants. *Abul Fazl*, advised the nobles to indulge a little in commercial speculation and engage in remunerative undertaking, reserving a portion in goods and wares and invest in the speculation of others. Establishing chards and markets was another favourable form of investment. The commercial speculations of some nobles, such as Mir Jumla, included a fleet of ships which operated all over west and south East Asia. *Thomas Roe* adds that 'great and small are traders. Nevertheless, income from land revenue remained the main source of income'. One may agree with Moreland that 'spending not hording' was the dominant characteristic of the pattern of life of the nobles.

There are innumerable interesting references to the lifestyle of the nobility. They lived in much luxury and indulged in so much extravagance that the rest of the populace looked mediocre and insignificant when compared to them. Generally, the nobles, according to a saying, "follow the creed of the rulers", adopted the pattern set by the emperor. The noble spent a huge amount of money in constructing the palatial houses. There were huge establishments meant to accommodate their families, personal staff and servants.⁶³ Each apartment consisted of several large halls and rooms for different purpose and contained several courtyards inside them.⁶⁴ Some of the residences had secret

62 Radhakamal Mukherjee, *The Economic History of India – 1600 –1800*, Allahabad, p. 69.

63 Jourdain, p. 163.

64 John de Laet, *De Imperio magni mogolis* tr. J. S. Hoyland, annotated by S. N. Banerji in the empire of the Great Mogol, Bombay, 1928. P.91

underground tunnels leading to unfrequented pathway to be used as safe passage for escape in times of danger.⁶⁵ Money was lavishly spent not only on construction but on outward decoration also. The floors were covered with beautiful thick carpets and soft cushions. The accounts of contemporary travellers who visited the residences of these nobles, corroborate this.⁶⁶ Bernier has given a graphic picture of an inner apartment of the nobles, which Pelsaert has described as the Diwan Khana. He further refers to the beds and serving utensils lavishly, ornamented with silver and gold. Manrique refers to Asaf Khan's furniture inlaid with precious stones to add beauty and richness and the walls paneled with manifold floral designs and covered with silicon hangings. The rooms were adorned with fine porcelain vases and flower pots made in earthen pottery and brought from distant lands.⁶⁷ The gardens, attached to these imposing residences, were well planned and maintained beautifully. To create a more charming and cool atmosphere, ornamental tanks, fish pounds, fountains and artificial springs were added to them. Water, running through these fountains in fine sprinkles, was the most fascinating and pleasing site during the scorching heat of summer.⁶⁸

Besides these lavishly furnished residences, the nobles also had their pleasure resort and country houses built in the same luxurious style, with beautiful gardens. Some of them also maintained their private boats for relaxation and recreation.⁶⁹

Manucci's vivid account of the dresses worn by ladies of the aristocracy makes interesting reading "ordinarily they wear two or three garments, each weighting not more than one ounce, and worth forty to fifty rupees each. They sleep in these clothes and renew them every twenty four hours and never put

65 Sujan Rai bhandari, *Khulasat -ul -tawarikh*, ed. Mohammad Zafar Husain. Delhi. 1918. p. 85.

66 Terry, Edward Edward *A Voyage to East India*, Purchas, Vol. IX, glassgow, 1905, p.130.

67 Manrique -II, p. 118, Bernier, p. 247, Manucci -II, p. 426

68 Father A Monseratte, *The commentary of father Monserrate, translated from Latin by J. S. Hoyland, annotated by S. N. Bannerji, Cuttak 1928 indian Ed .p. 219*, Tavernier -I, p. 393.

69 Richard Steel & John Crowther, *A Journal of their Journey*, Purchas, IV, p. 82, Pelsaert, p. 5, Thevenot, p. 82.

them again, but give them away to their servants.”⁷⁰ The upper class ladies also wore costly shawls. The shoes were made of leather and the upper part was adorned with velvet, leather and gold work. Manucci estimated the cost of one slipper of Jafar Khan’s wife at fifty thousand rupees.⁷¹

The use of costly gold ornaments inset with precious gems was very common, among both men and women of the upper class. Almost every part of the body, -Ears, Nose, Neck, Wrist, Ankles and Arms etc. adorned with them.⁷² The upper class, according to their status, had large female establishment, consisting of numerous wives, mistresses, and concubines. A large, retinue of servants and slaves were also maintained, and it was customary to keep horses, Camels, Elephants etc.⁷³

Amongst the main items of expenditure may be maintained the marriage celebrations, annual festivals and social gatherings, including feasts and parties, organized by the upper class. Beside these, the presents made to the emperor and the royal family comprised of fine pearls, diamonds, emeralds, rubies and vessels filled with gold coins.⁷⁴

Manrique mentions that amongst the variety of confectionary items for nobility such as pastries and cakes in European style.⁷⁵ Tea and coffee⁷⁶, iced, drinks, betel, and certain other intoxicants were in common use. Perfumes of many kinds from flowers, distilled essence, and rose water were in great demand. It was traditional for ladies to dye their hand and feet with Heena. At most of the festive, parties dancing and singing by professionals was a common feature.⁷⁷

70 Niccolao Manucci, *Pepys of Mogul India*, English translator, Irvine John Murrar, London, 1913. II. P. 341.

71 Op., cit., Manucci, III. P. 38.

72 Terry, pp. 30 -34. John fryer, *A New Account of the East India and Persia, being nine years, travels. 1672 -81*, ed, W. Crooke, Vol. I. p. 235.

73 Careri, p. 243.

74 Op., cit., Terry, p. 32. Roe .p. 35. Tuzuk I, pp .319 -23.

75 Manrique II, p. 218 -19.

76 Alexander Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies*, being observation and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton, Edited by William Foster. London. 1930.I, p. 119.

77 Peter Mundy, *The travel of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, 1608 -67*. edited by Richard carnac Temple and L. M. Anstey, Cambridge 1907 -36. II, P.216.

THE MIDDLE CLASS

The European travellers and writers have made then candid remarks about the existence of middle class included the official, warriors, traders, intellectuals, and those resulted in formation of their respective caste system.⁷⁸ Contrary to the descriptions of the foreign writers, the intellectuals and other professional classes including scholars, musicians, artists, calligraphists, poets, physicians, etc. executed important functions. Most of them were patronized directly by the Emperor and the nobles.

Lin schoten remarks that the shopkeepers, the traders, the merchants, the bankers as well as the physicians and the writer caste – consisted of the middle class in Mughal India. Physicians earned handsomely from practice. He found the Indian physicians at Goa prospered with lucrative practice both among the Portuguese and the native population besides earning high honour and esteem. Astrologers were also in large demand especially, among the nobility and acquired large wealth.⁷⁹

It is, generally, agreed that the Mughals had developed a highly centralized system of administration. One is often surprised at the detailed and meticulous records which the Mughal government maintained, including detailed records of prices, taxes, number of houses, name and castes of revenue payees and householders, etc. The Mansab and jagir systems also generated voluminous records. The Mughals needed an enormous number of petty officials such as *diwan*, *muharrir*, *amil*, *karkun*, to cope with the immense secretarial work involved in their system of administration. The lower officials of mansabdars and the gentlemen troopers (*ahadis*) could also be placed within their category from the point of view of income.

It is quite evident from the accounts of the travellers that the commercial and financial structure of Mughal India was highly developed. There was

78 op. cit., Iqtidar Alam Khan, *The Middle Class in the Mughal Empire*; p. 12, Prof. I. A. Khan in his presidential address has categorically laid emphasizes is on the presence of middle class during Mughal period.

79 Op., cit., R.K. Mukherjee, op. cit, p. 66.

considerable specialization of functions among traders. The wholesale traders, shopkeepers, money-changers-cum money lenders (*sarraf*) and *gumashtas* and *dalal* (agent brokers) formed separate professional groups. The Banjaras specialized in transporting commodities in bulk. There was a keen competition going on in the market for a particular commodity and merchants left no stone unturned to exploit the situation or a higher profit was to be earned. According to contemporary writers, the cities were busy con -courses of merchants (*beoparis*) selling all kinds of goods from jewels and clothes to animals. The master craftsmen must be considered alongside the merchants. Significantly, in his four-fold division of society, Abul Fazl bracketed the merchants and master-craftsmen, placing them below the nobles, but above the religious and intellectual classes.

Moreland, and Bernier stated, that "In Delhi there is no middle state. A man must either be of the highest rank or live miserable."⁸⁰ Moreland indicated that with the exception of those who depended on various public officers, these were "no lawyers very few if any professional teachers, no journalists, or politicians, no engineers, no forms of employment corresponding to the modern railways, postal or irrigation services, or to factories and large workshops, scarcely and families living upon accumulated property."⁸¹ Brij Narian, pointed out that rich and influential merchants under Akbar and Jahangir "would form a middle class between the common laborer and the artisan on one side and the nobles on the other."⁸²

According to Beni Prasad, "the better sort of trader the more flourishing Priest, Physician, artist, astrologer, together with the second-class military and civil officer formed what may be called a middle class."⁸³ Tapan Ray Chaudhuri, disagreed with Moreland on the comparative insignificance" of the middle class and pointed out that as a matter of fact, Bengal, in the period under review, had

80 Op., cit., F. Bernier, *Traveles in the Mughal Empire*, AD. 1656 -1668. edited by, A Constable, Delhi; 1972, p -252.

81 Op., cit., W.H. Moreland, *India at The Death of Akbar.*, p -24 -25.

82 Brij Narain, *Indian Economic Life Past and Present*, Lahore, 1929, pp -57 -58.

83 Beni Prasad, *Indian in 1605*, "The Modern Review," Calcutta 1921, p -17.

a numerous middle class pursuing a variety of professions.⁸⁴ Iqtidar Alam Khan suggested that the trading and the professional groups formed the middle stratum.⁸⁵ Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, found it very surprising that Moreland has completely ignored the evidence of Dutch and Italian sources regarding the existence, especially, at coastal towns, of numerous body of merchants and trading classes, constituting a very wealthy middle class.⁸⁶

Prof. Brij Narayan's contention again that, our large and profitable foreign commerce, which made streams of gold and silver, flow from many parts of the world, to our country suggested the existence of a numerous and wealthy merchant class; in the pre –British period. He assumed that, "these merchants would form a middle class between the common laborer and the artisan on the one side and the nobles on the other. A rich and influential middle class, engaged in trade and commerce, must have then existed under Akbar and Jahangir."⁸⁷ Radhakamal Mukherji indicated about social stratification that, a middle class consisting of traders, bankers, merchants, shopkeepers as well as physicians and the writer caste existed in Mughal India. It has been surmised that the group of revenue officials who enjoyed this prosperity consisted mostly of Brahmans, Kayastha, Khatri and Baniyas. Revenue officials seem to have become prosperous in the provinces also. In Bengal many of the *diwans* and *bakshis* serving the local Rajas, as well as the *qanungos* became wealthy *zamindars*. Their prosperity certainly did not depend upon their salaries, but on their manipulations, including bribe-taking, defalcation of revenue and revenue farming.⁸⁸

FOOD HABITS OF UPPER AND MIDDLE CLASS

An account of various vegetarian and non –vegetarian dishes is given below which was, of course, consumed and enjoyed by mostly the upper classes

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- 84 Tapan Ray Chaudhuri, Bengal Under Akbar and Jahanfir, Delhi 2nd Edition, 1969, p - 197.
 - 85 Iqtidar Alam Khan, The Middle Classes in The Mughal Empire, "Presidential address Indian History Congress, Aligarh -1975, pp -13 -41.
 - 86 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Mughal Economy Organization and Working, Calcutta 1987, pp -254 -60.
 - 87 Brij Narain, Indian Economic Life, Past and Present pp -57 -58.
 - 88 Op., cit., I.A Khan, p. 10.

as the masses would not know even the names of the most dishes consumed in the royal kitchen or those of nobility and other upper and middle classes members. Though the main source is Ain, but other relevant source is also not neglected the vegetarian meals or non –vegetarian meals.

(VEGETARIAN MEALS)

Among the vegetarian dishes cooked in the royal kitchen of Akbar, Abul Fazl mentions the following:-

1. **Zardbirani** – It was made of rice, sugarcandy and ghee. It could be prepared with or without almonds, pistachio, *kishmish*, saffron, ginger, cinnamon and cardamoms.
2. **Khushke** – It was a dish of simple rice without ghee and spices and salt.
3. **Sheerbiranj** was prepared from wheat ground and ghee and salt and spices.
4. **Chikhee** was made of paste and wheat ground and one-tenth of ghee along with salt and spices.
5. **Badanjan** – coconut, ghee, onion, and spices went into the preparation of this dish.
6. **Pahet** was prepared from skinned pulses like *mung*, *mash* and lentils, ghee and spices.
7. **Sag** was a very natural dish made of spinach, fennel, ghee and spices.
8. **Halwa** was pudding prepared from wheat flour, sugar candy and ghee.
9. **Khichri** was also a regular dish in Akbar's kitchen. It was made as today from split *mung*, rice and ghee.⁸⁹

Among the vegetables given in the Ain are: Radishes; carrots; cabbage; fennel; kachnar; (banbinia variegata) flowers; sorrel; mint; wild carrot (shaqaqul), red spinach; palwal (trichothan thanses dioica plant) gourd, bean, pyrch, kerala

⁸⁹ Op., cit., *Ain –I –Akbari*, p -44

(bitter gourd), kakora, kachalu, chachendra; suran; singhara; salak; pindalu; siyala; kesru. Among the sags were: spinach, chulai, fenugreek; bathua. Other names given in the translation of Blochmann are: turnips; kankachhu (from Kashmir); Dunwretu; upalhak; jitu; ratsakus.⁹⁰

The prevalent prices of vegetables when the Ain was compiled were the following:

Fennel	10 dams a man
Spinach	16 dams a man
Mint	40 dams a man
Tunip	21 dams a man
Cabbage	1 dams a ser
Kankachhu	4 dams a ser (from Kashmir)
Dunwretu	2 dams a ser
Shaqaquul	3 dams a ser (wild carrot)
Upalhak	1 dams a ser (from Kashmir)
Jutu	3 dams a ser
Poi	1 dams a ser
Kachnar buds	1/2 dams a ser
Chukka (sorrel)	1/2 dams a ser
Bathua	1/4 dams a ser
Ratsaku	1 dams a ser
Chulai	1/4 dams a ser
Garlic flowers	1 dam a ser

Peter Mundy mentions the names of colewort, lattice, mint and beets among the herbs in India and turnips and carrots and potatoes among roots.⁹¹

NON –VEGETARIAN MEALS

The following were the meat preparations as given by the Abul Fazl in his days by upper and middle class, particularly, Muslims.

⁹⁰ Ibid , pp -45 -66.

⁹¹ op., cit Mundy, II, p -309.

QABULI: In ten seers of rice, 7 seers of meat and 3½ seers of ghee were required. To make qabuli delicious they put in it skinned gram, onions, cinnamon, round pepper, cardamoms and cloves, fresh ginger and cumin seed. Some also added almonds and raisins.

DUZDBIRYAN: In order to prepare five dishes 10 seers each of rice and meat and 3-1/2 seers of ghee were needed.

QIMA PALAO: For this dish rice and meat in the above proportion was necessary.

SHULLA: For preparing six dishes of shulla 10 seers of meat, 3 ½ seers of rice, 2 seers of ghee and one seer of gram were required besides prescribed quantities of garlic and onion and all other items of spices as needed for Qabuli.

BUGHRA: Twelve dishes of this preparation needed 10s. Meat. 3s, Flour, 1-1/2 seers ghee, 1s. Gram, 1 ½ s. vinegar, 1s. Sugar candy, besides ¼ s. each of onions, carrots, beets, turnips, fennel and ginger. Saffron, cloves, cardamoms, cinnamon and round pepper were also added.

QIMA SHORBA: For preparing ten full dishes of qima shorba, 10s. Meat, one seer ghee and ½ s. grams were adequate besides all other items as needed for shulla.

HARISA: dish was prepared from 10s. Meat, 5s. Crushed wheat, 2s. Ghee, 1s. Gram, besides salt, onions and ginger. This made five dishes.

KASHK: For making five dishes of this 10s. Meat, 5s. Crushed wheat, 2s. Ghee, besides salt, onion, ginger, cinnamon, cardamoms, cloves, cuminseed and saffron were required.

HALIM needed the same quantity of meat, wheat, gram, spices and saffron as for kashk. One seer ghee, ¼ s. of turnips and carrots, spinach and fennel each gave ten dishes.

QUTAB or **SANBUSA** could be prepared in 20 different ways for full four dishes the quantities of items needed were: 10s. Meat, 4s. Fine flour, 2s. Ghee, 1s. Onions, ½ s. fresh ginger besides the other usual spices.

BIRYAN was made in various ways and for a whole *Dashmundi* sheep one seer of ghee, 2s. Salt, besides saffron, cloves, pepper and cuminseed, were needed.

YAKHNI was made of meat. One seer onion and ½ s. of salt were needed if yakhni of 10s. Of meat was to be prepared.

YULMA: For this they scalded a sheep in water till its wook came off and then prepared the yulma dish like that of yakhuni. But for this a lamb or kid was more preferable.

KABAB was made of various kinds. Half a seer of ghee was adequate if kabab from 10s. Meat was to be prepared. Usual spices were also necessary.

MUSSAMAN was prepared of a whole fowl whose bones were taken out through the neck. The ingredients needed for its preparation were ½ s. minced meat; ½ s. ghee; 5eggs; and the usual other spices and saffron.

DUPIYAZA: To have five dishes of this preparation they took 10s. Meat, s. ghee, 2s, Onions and other spices.

MUTANJANA sheep: It was made of 10s. Meat, 2s. Ghee, and other spices or of fowl and fish.

DAMPUKHT: For the preparation of DAMPUKHT they needed 10s. Of meat, 2s. Ghee, 1s. onions and other spices.

QALIYA: Almost the quantities of meat and other items were the same as in the above for the preparation of this dish. In preparing it, the meat was minced and the gravy was thick, in opposition to the mutanjana.

MALGHUBA was perhaps the only meat dish which besides the above quantity of meat, 10s. Curd besides other spices was added.⁹²

92 op., cit *Ain*, Text, p -43; Blochmann, pp -61 -64.

Some of the meat dishes mentioned in the Ain have also been referred to by the contemporary foreign travellers. Herbert Moll alludes to dampukht i.e. fowl boiled in butter of ghee and stuffed with raisin and almonds. It was prepared with spices in butter and Muslims had a special preference for it.⁹³

Abul Fazl has recorded the prices of various animals and birds whose flesh was eaten by the people:

Table 1.1
Prices of Various Animals and Birds

Sr. No.	Name	Price per head
1.	Dashmundy sheep	Rs. 0.25
2.	Afghan sheep first kind	Rs. 2.00
3.	Afghan sheep second kind	Rs. 1.50
4.	Afghan sheep third kind	Rs. 1.25
5.	Kashmiri sheep	Rs. 1.50
6.	Hindustani sheep	Rs. 1.50
7.	Barbari goat	Rs. 0.75
8.	Mutton per mound	65 dams
9.	Goat per mound	54 dams
10.	Goose	20 dams
11.	Duck per head	One rupee
12.	Tughdari (bastard) per head	20 dams
13.	Kulang (crane)	20 dams
14.	Jarz (kind of bastard)	18 dams
15.	Durraj (black partridge)	3 dams
16.	Kabg (partridge)	20 dams
17.	Budana	1 dams
18.	Lavah	1 dams
19.	Karwanak (stone curlew)	20 dams
20.	Fakhta	1 dams ⁹⁴

⁹³ Herbert Moll, p-254; Fryer, p-234.

⁹⁴ op., cit Ain,-I- Blochmann, pp -66 -67.

The Ain mentions the following items of pickles along with their prices⁹⁵:

Table 1.2
Items of Pickles along with their Prices

Sr. No.	Item	Price in dams per ser
1.	Sour limes	6
2.	Lemon –juice	5
3.	Wine vinegar	5
4.	Sugarcane vinegar	5
5.	Pickled ashtarghar	8
6.	Mangoes in oil	2
7.	Mangoes in vinegar	2
8.	Mangoes in salt	1½
9.	Mangoes in lemon –juice	3
10.	Pickled ginger	2 ½
11.	Adarshakh ginger	2 ½
12.	Pickled carrots	½
13.	Pickled bamboo	4
14.	Pickled apple	8
15.	Pickled quinces	9
16.	Pickled garlic	1
17.	Pickled onions	½
18.	Pickled Badinjan	1
19.	Pickled raisins & manuqqa	8
20.	Pickled Kachnar	2
21.	Pickled Peaches	1
22.	Pickled Sahajna (Horse raddish)	1
23.	Pickled Karil buds	½
24.	Pickled Karil berries	½
25.	Pickled Suran	1
26.	Pickled mustard	¼
27.	Pickled Tori (cucumber)	½
28.	Pickled Cucumbers	½
29.	Pickled Badrang (gourd)	½
30.	Pickled Kachalu	½
31.	Pickled Raddishes	½

95 Ibid, Ain, pp., 50- 58.

In 1615, the prices of various conserves were as noted below⁹⁶:

Table 1.3
Prices of Various Conserves

<i>Sr. No.</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Price per mound</i>
1.	Ginger green	Rs. 2 and 27 paise per maound
2.	Myroblan	Rs. 3-1/2 per maound
3.	Mangoes	Rs. 4-1/2 per maound
4.	Salt fruit	Rs. 5 per maound

HOUSING PATTERN OF UPPER AND MIDDLE CLASS: According to Monserrate, Delhi had fine private houses, 'well-built lofty and handsomely decorated'.⁹⁷ Bernier says that a house was considered beautiful which was spacious and had a courtyard garden, trees, a basin of water, and handsome furnished apartments with large fans.⁹⁸

In Bengal, the nobles' houses were built of bricks, some of them in three storeys and in grand style. A single house in the Deccan cost a noble Rs. 150,000. The furniture included bedsheets, mirrors, chairs and stools, all richly decorated with inlay work. Fine wooden boxes of inlay were produced in Gujarat and were in wide demand. The floor was often covered by rich carpets and cushions. *Berniers* says that the whole floor would be covered by a cotton mattress, four inches thick. A fine cloth was spread over the floor during summer and silk carpets during winter. The cushions were quilted with 'flowered' cloth ornamental with delicate silk embroidery, interspersed with gold and silver, or with brocaded velvet and flowered satin. The roof too would be richly guilded with costly hangings of rich curtains.

The people of this class differed widely in incomes and earnings, behavior and outlook, and this was reflected in their living standards, and life –style. This

96 op., cit *Letters Received III*, 1617, p -41.

97 op., cit Monserrate, *Commentary* (trans.) Hoyland, and Benerji, p. 97.

98 op., cit Bernier, 247.

class had a habit of savings from their income and earnings, and some of them, especially the merchants and traders at times even adopted the means by which they might appear indigent, or in need of subsistence.⁹⁹ That is although they had lot of money they put up an outward cover of poverty. The style of dress of the middle class did not differ very much from that of the upper class. In fact, both men and women wore simple and plain cloth, they also used turbans and caps. The Hindu Pandits wore only two pieces of cloth one a Dhoti to cover the lower limbs, and the other a scarf to cover the upper part of the body, the quality of the cloth depending on their status. Shoes were of various types. The merchants wore shoes with heels for convenience,¹⁰⁰ while others used shoes without heels. Thevenot, express that “the rich Baniyas cover the upper leather of their with velvet embroidered with great flowers of silk and the rest are satisfied with red leather and small flowers, or some other gentry of little value”.¹⁰¹

Men and women of this class were quite fond of ornaments. The middle class were quite well off and their women were laden with jewelry. Manucci says, “their children –carry from the birth to seven years of age little well on their legs, either of gold or silver and a little chain of the same metal around the waist.”¹⁰² Most section of the middle class celebrated family functions such as the birth of a child, marriages, and festivals on a grand scale. Feasts and exchange of presents were common features on these occasions money was spent lavishly according to means and status.¹⁰³

RECREATIONS AND PASTIMES (UPPER AND MIDDLE CLASS)

The Mughal period has been called the age of joy and pleasure on account of organisation of different kinds of games, sports, and various other kinds of pastimes and recreation. There is no much difference between the pastimes of Mughal period and those of today. One of the very significant feature

99 Op., cit., Pelsaert, p. 63.

100 Op., cit., Thevenot, p. 52.

101 Ibid.

102 Op., cit., Manucci, III, p.138

103 Ibid 150.

of the outdoor games and amusements of that period was that they had been greatly influenced by the military and adventurous characteristics of the age. Some of the games like Chaugan (Polo), hunting animal fights, racing etc. were, practically, the monopoly of the aristocratic few, while other like chess, chaupar, playing cards, pigeon-flying, kite-flying, wrestling, fencing etc. were accessible to the rich and the poor alike.

INDOORS GAMES: The important and popular indoor games were chess, playing cards, chaupar, chandal-mandal and dice gambling.

CHESS: Abul Fazk writes that it was most popular indoor games at that time for both high and low classes.¹⁰⁴ Akbar is said to have played the game of living chess with slave girls as pieces moving on the chequered pavement of the pachisi court at Fatehpur Sikri. The emperor played this game “four-handed and two-handed” and his chief object was to test the value of men, and to establish harmony and good fellow-feeling at the court.¹⁰⁵

Once, the Bihar Governor, Jamal-ud-din, invited the British Ambassador, Sir Thomas Roe to a dinner at Hafiz Jamal, Jahangir’s pleasure garden near Ajmer. After the dinner the Nawab played at chess.¹⁰⁶ De Laet also remarked about the Indians’ fondness for the game of chess.¹⁰⁷ Edward Terry found the Indians very skilful in that most innocent and ingenious game we call chess.¹⁰⁸ In 1614, William Edward, an employee of the East India Company at Ahmedabad, sent to Sir Thomas Smith, the governor of the East India Company in London, a pair of play tables for the game of chess, as a token of my remembrance.¹⁰⁹

DICE-GAMBLING: Gambling was considered unlawful both by the Hindus and the Muslims; Thevenot, Eye witness of this game, says that there used to be much gambling during festival days. He narrates the story of a Delhi merchant

104 Op., cit., *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 320, trs. Bloch.

105 Ibid.

106 The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe, Ed. W. Foster, p. 212.

107 Joannes Da Laet, *The Empire of the Great Mogul*, Edited & translated by John S.Hoyland, annotated by S.N.Bannerjee, D.B.Taraporewala & Sons, Bombay, 1928. pp. 82-83.

108 Op., cit., Terry Edward, *A Voyage to East india*, London, 1777, p. 405.

109 Op., cit., Letter Received 1613-15, p. 246.

who lost all his money, goods, house, even wife and children in the game. The winners later showed the generosity of returning the wife and children; but only a small portion of the huge money won from him was returned to him.¹¹⁰

PLAYING CARDS: K. M. Ashraf's view that it appears to have been first introduced in Hindustan by the Mughal Emperor Babur.¹¹¹ The game consisted of twelve suits of twelve cards each, making a total of 144 with different kind of kings and their attendants.¹¹² Akbar only made some suitable alternations in the cards.¹¹³ Jahangir was intensely fond of it.¹¹⁴ Roe once saw Shahjahan playing cards earnestly. This game was equally popular with the common people who displayed different tricks at cards.¹¹⁵

CHAUPAR: The game Chaupar is of Indian origin. A reference in Ain-i-Akbari shows that sometime as many as 200 Mughal nobles used to take part in the play. A match used to be 16 games. During Akbar's reign, participants were not allowed to go home till they had finished the games which sometimes lasted for three months. The playing of Chaupar was particularly famous among Rajputs.¹¹⁶ Zeb-un-Nisa, the eldest daughter of Aurangzeb spent most of her spare time in playing chaupar with her girl's friends.

CHANDAL-MANDAL: Abul Fazl describes the technique of playing this game. As in Chaupar, the pieces are moved to the right and pass through the whole circle. The player who is first out is entitled to receive the stipulated amount from the fifteen players; the second that is out, from fourteen players, and so on. The first player, therefore, wins the most and the last one loses the most whereas of the other players, both lose and win. Akbar appears to have been very fond of

110 Indian Travels and Careri ed. by S. N. Sen, National Archives of India, New Delhi, 1949, p. 67.

111 Op., cit., K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan*, New Delhi, 1970, p. 226.

112 Op., cit., *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 319, trs. Bloch.

113 Ibid.

114 Thomas Roe, *The Embassy of Thomas Roe to the Court of Great Mogul*, Edited by William Foster, 2 Vols. London, 1899.

115 Della-Valle in India, Ed. Grey-Haklyuat Society, 1892, Two Vols., p. 406.

116 Op., cit., *Ain-i-Akbari*, J.A.S.B., vol. I, 1935, Article No. 4, p. 296.

this game and he played it in several ways.¹¹⁷ Manucci opines that the “greatest amusement of the Muslims was” to pass the greatest part of their time among the women. This is so much the case that through them important business of court is transacted. For his part he had done a great deal through the first princess.¹¹⁸

To ask one another to solve puzzles and narrate stories were other pastime of the people in those days. Rahim speaks of the dance of dolls which might have been an interesting pastime for the young girls. Dancing, singing and narratives from the classics were other pastimes of the people. Another hobby was the rearing of domestic birds like parrots, mynas and others to tutor them. Children had their playthings in the house and they were usually coloured. Among them were small cots, black bees and wasps, caskets balls, swans, chakor, and peacocks and sparrows, naturally, made of clay or wood. Among other initiating play things used to be canes, horns of beasts, and also lutes.¹¹⁹

MUSIC AND SOCIAL PARTIES: Abul Fazl mentions, “Music as talisman of knowledge” which formed one of the most favourite pastimes. The nobles and the rich were good at music both instrumental and vocal. In Akbar’s court, there were a large number of musicians including Hindus, Iranis, Turanis, Kashmiris and of both sexes. Abul Fazal has mentioned thirty six names of musicians in the Ain. The Mughal Emperor, Babur, himself, excelled in music and composed songs. His son, Humayun, enjoyed a book and a song it with palatable food and flasks of wine.¹²⁰

It is worthwhile to mention that women singers played the most important role in the society of Munhall. The women singers sang at feasts and marriage festivals. It is evident that some ladies of the royal family also took keen interest in music and were themselves good singers. Ratnavali, the wife of Purim Mal sang Hindi melodies sweetly. Man Singh’s queen, Mrignayani was expert in

117 Op., cit., *Ain-i-Akbari*, I Tr. (Black), p. 317.

118 *A Pepy’s of Mughal India*, p. 203.

119 S.P. Sangar, *Amusements in Seventeenth Century India*, Panjab University Research Bulletin (Arts), Vol. XVIII, No. 2, October 1987, pp. 159-160.

120 *Tuzuk-i-Baburi*, pp 292-303.

music. It is said that Nurjahan Begum and Petunias Begum also sang well and the former even composed songs. Mirabel was a good singer. Kittens were sung by the devotees in praise of God.¹²¹ It appears in Ain-I-Akbari that a large number of wind and string instruments were used by the musicians were Dhal, Sarah, Away, Daft, dadah, Peshawar. Khanjara, tantra mantra, vina, sarbin, rubab, sarangi, murli, ranak, tal, kat tal, mashk, ambhiti, sarmandal, kingira and upang.¹²²

JASHANS: Jashans or social parties, accompanied with feasts, dancing, music and other means of entertainment, formed a very important indoor diversion for the sovereigns and the well to do classes. On such festive occasions, vocal as well as instrumental music was played and dainty wines, dry fruits and rich dishes were served to the participants, who busily engaged themselves in some indoor games like chess, chaupar, playing cards, etc. In short, music and dancing, feasts as well as drinking, constituted the chief ingredients of such social gatherings.

MINA BAZAR: Mina Bazar or fancy fair also formed another important means of recreation for the Emperor, his family and important members of aristocracy. The pomp and grandeur of these 'fancy fairs' appeared to have been greatly increased during the reign of Shahjahan. Manucci gives a graphic picture of the various past times of the ladies of harems. To this must be added that they have permission to enjoy the pleasure of the comedy and dance, to listen to tales and stories of love, to recline upon beds of the running water, to hear singing and another similar pastimes.¹²³

There were many outdoor games. This game became popular among the nobles and ladies of the royal households. The commoners could be spectators only and not participants. Amber was very fond of the game. Abul Fazl remarks that eternally the game added to the splendor of the court, but viewed from a higher point reveals concealed talents. Akbar selected the polo players by the

121 *Op., cit., Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. III, p. 257.

122 *Op., cit., Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. II, Persian Text, pp. 140-42.

123 *Op., cit., Manucci, Niccolo, Storia de Mogir*, Tr. and ed. By Irwin, London, 1907, 4 Vol., Vol. II, p. 352.

caste of die “as the never orders anyone to be a player.”¹²⁴ Following were the important outdoor games:

WRESTLING: Wrestling was considered to be not only a pastime but also an exercise to keep them fit. Many wrestling matches took place under the royal patronage and the Mughal kings and princes took delight in seeing them and heartening the contestants by their presence. The winners were profusely rewarded.¹²⁵

BOXING: According to De Laet “He enjoys looking at boxing matches at conjuring.”¹²⁶ Akbar kept a large number of Turani and Persian boxers at the court for he was especially fond of this game.¹²⁷ Manucci also refers to this game.¹²⁸

RIDING: Horse riding was a common sight. Sometimes the rich also enjoyed elephant riding. Princesses used to enjoy horse riding.

BOATING: Boats were used mostly as a means of transport but sometimes nobles did not use them to refresh themselves by boating on river and lakes. Rare pleasure boats, More Pankhs or Bajras, were constructed for this purpose for nobles.¹²⁹

RACES: Horse Racing and dog racing were sources of entertainment among the high class Mughal nobles. Akbar took great delight in it.¹³⁰

PIGEON FLYING: Pigeon flying was a common entertainment for both the high class and the common people. Akbar renamed the sport as Ishqbazi. Royal pigeons were taught to perform charkh and bazi. During the reign of Jahangir the number of Khasah pigeon seems to have increased to 10,000. Manucci refers to

124 Op., cit., *Ain-Bloch I*, p. 247.

125 Op., cit., *Storia*, I, p. 191, *Ain-i*, p. 363.

126 Op., cit., De Laet., *The Empire if the Great Mughal*, ed. Hoyland and Banerjee, Bombay, 1928, p. 82.

127 Op., cit., Monserrate, p. 198.

128 Op., cit., Manucci, Niccolo, *Storia de Mogir*, Tr. and ed. By Irwin, London, 1907, Vol. I, p. 191.

129 Op., cit., Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia*, 1606-1667, ed. Richard Carnac Temple, London, 1907, vol. 2, p. 158.

130 Op. Cit., *Storia-II*, p. 352, Bernier, p. 34.

this game and informs us that the pigeons were also engaged for carrying messages from one place to another.¹³¹

HUNTING: Hunting was one of the best means of recreation and amusement during the Mughal times and was indulged in by kings, nobles and the commoners. Almost all the great Mughals were fond of this game. Akbar was very fond of hunting lions, tigers, elephants,¹³² leopards, deer, water fowls, dogs, wild asses, etc. and he had also devised new method for that purpose.

Herbert Moll did not find them using dogs fit for the purpose as they did in Europe. Fryer, however, opines that they did use dogs. They also kept hawks for hunting. These were, usually, brought from Persia and they preyed upon partridges and other such birds. De Laet found the Indian hunters as very clever archers, dexterous in shooting the flying birds with their arrows which were skillfully fashioned out of light seeds carefully dried for the purpose. They made bows out of the horns of the buffaloes. The Indians were very excellent marksmen and shot with their arrow. When they aimed with their guns, says Terry, with single bullets they took long.¹³³ Bernier gives in details the hunting of Nilgais and Lion in Mughal India in the reign of Akbar and Jahangir.¹³⁴

Archibald constable remarks: The Emperor Akbar, who was a great sportsman, caused not only an account to be kept of the game he shot, but ordered that particulars of the guns used should also be recorded. Jahangir inherited his father's love of sport, except that he never hunted elephants nor did he care for shooting water-fowl. In his memoirs, he gives many details of his hunting exploits, and tells us how he caused the officials of the Hunting department to draw up a "game book" embracing his life from the age of twelve to fifty. This list tells us that during these years he shot 17,167 head of game of all kinds, including 86 Tigers, 41 sparrows, 3276 crows and 10 alligators.¹³⁵

131 Op., cit., Storia-II, p. 467.

132 *Akbarnamah II (Bevridge Trans.)*, pp. 368, 393, 513.

133 Herbert Moll, p. 255, Fryer, p. 280, Peter Mundy II, p. 112.

134 Op., cit., Ovington, p. 168, Careri, p. 246.

135 Op., cit., Bernier, pp. 375-378.

Shahjahan also took keen interest in tiger-hunting for which he kept ferocious buffaloes with very long horns. They fought with each other and with tigers.¹³⁶

ANIMAL FIGHTS: The fighting between animals of different varieties afforded important means of popular recreation. The Emperor and the aristocracy entertained themselves with expensive and risky combats between elephant, tigers, deer, leopards, camels, boars, buffalo, and horse's etc.

Peter Mundy records that animal fights took place only in the presence of the King, in the afternoons of Tuesdays and Saturdays in Agra. Usually, two elephants were appointed for the day to engage in fighting. They were brought to the place earmarked for the fight and the king sat in Jharoka or window to witness the fight. They started when ordered and ran against one another with their trunks aloft. They pushed each other with all their strength till separated by mahauts or by fireworks or bamboos or staves. They were again set to join the fight.¹³⁷ Sometime one got the victory by overbearing the other in strength. In Jahangir's time daily fights used to take place.

JEWELLERY: *Fryer* says 'The rich women have their arms and feet fettered with gold and silver, the meaner with brass and glass and tithing, besides rings in their noses, ears, toes and fingers.'¹³⁸ *Ralph Fitch* writing about Patna, said 'Here the woman be so bedecked with sliver and copper that it is strange to see, that they use no shoes, by season of rings of silver and copper they wear on their toes.'¹³⁹ He also explained that the Indian women are very strangely allured wearing on their noses, ears, neckles, armes, and legges many rings set with jewels and lockets of silver and gold in their ears, and a long bare of gold upon the side of their noses. Their ears with the weight of their jewels are worn so wide that a man may thrust three of his fingers into them.¹⁴⁰ The use of costly gold ornaments inset with precious gems was very common, the value and

136 Op., cit., Manucci-I, p. 191.

137 Op., cit., Tavernier, I, p. 106; Mundy, II, p. 121-128.

138 Op., cit., Fryer, 11, 117.

139 Ralph Fitch ed. W. Foster, pp. 22 – 3 – 28.

140 Op., cit., William Foster, ed., *Early Travels of India*, p -12.

richness of their ornaments depended on their rank and wealth.¹⁴¹ Almost every part of the body- ears, nose, neck, wrists, ankles and arms etc. was adorned with them.¹⁴²

THE LOWER CLASS: (COMMON PEOPLE) The lowest class of Muslim society was composed mainly of the artisans, shopkeepers and petty traders, small number of peasants, workers and clerks. Besides these barbers, tailors, washermen, ferrymen, grass-cutters drumbeaters, betel-leaf sellers, flower sellers, oilmen, jugglers, musicians, shepherds and still others. Beggars and the destitute also came under this category.¹⁴³

According to Moreland, common people led a miserable life. Because the upper class generally, felt, that they do not deserve anything better; and scarcely anyone will make an effort for a ladder by which to climb higher. It is hard to find, because a workman's children can follow no occupation other than that of their father, nor can they inter –marry with any other caste. There are three classes of people who are, indeed, nominally free, but whose status differs very little from voluntary slavery –workmen, peons or servants and shopkeepers. Pelsaert, remark about the poor wages by various categories of workmen is quiet apt where he says and hard labour performed “For the workmen there are two scourges, the first of which is low wages goldsmiths, painters, embroiders, carpet –makers, cotton or silk weavers, blacksmiths, coppersmiths, tailors, masons, builders, stonecutters, a hundred crafts in all, for a job which one man would do in Holland here passes through four men's hands before it is finished any of these by working from morning to night can earn only 5 or 6 tackas.”¹⁴⁴

We are on a somewhat firmer ground in assessing the standard of living of the workmen since their wages have been given in the *Ain* and also by the

141 Op., cit., Della Valle, 1, p. 45.

142 Edward Terry, pp. 30 & 34. Careri, p. 248. John Fryer, A New Account of East India and Persia, being Nine Years' Travels, 1672-81, ed, W, Crooke, Vols., 1, p. 235.

143 K. M. Ashraf, *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, J.A.S.B. I, 1935, p. 193.

144 The word 'tacka' is some times hard to interpret but the equation here given shows that Pelsaert used it for the Dam the word is presumably Tanka. That is 4 or 5 stivers in wages. op., cit Roe, Thomas, Embassy to the court of the Great Mugul, 1615-19, Edited, W. Foster, London 1899, p.102

European travellers during the first quarter of the seventeenth century. According to the *Ain* an ordinary labourer got about 2 dams a day, while a superior labourer could get 3 dams a day. Carpenters got 3 to 7 dams and builders from 5 to 7 dams per day. Pelsaert says the wages of ordinary servants and attendants of Agra ranged from 3 to 4 Rs. per month, but sometimes the month was regarded as forty day's. Pietro Della Valle says that at Surat servants cost very little – about Rs. 3/- a month. Slaves were numerous and demanded little more than their keep.¹⁴⁵ The second (scourage) is the operation of the Governor, the nobles, the Diwans, the Kotwal, the Bakshi and other royal officers. The author (Pelsaert) goes on to add "if anyone of them wants workmen, the man is not asked if he is willing to come, but he is seized in the house or in the street, well beaten if he should dare to raise any objection, and in the evening paid half his wages or nothing at all".

Salbank, writing in the early seventeenth century about the people between Lahore and Agra, says that the plebeian sort is so poor that the greatest parts of them go naked.¹⁴⁶ But *Ralph Fitch* says that the people go naked save a little bound about their middle, but in the winter, the men wear quilted gowns of cotton and quilted caps.¹⁴⁷ *Moreland* points out that, women did not wear any blouses with their sari, and treats it as an illustration of the paucity of clothing.¹⁴⁸ Then, he goes on to describe the decency clout worn by the men, the sari worn by the women.¹⁴⁹ *Abul Fazl* says that the common people of Bengal for the most part went naked, wearing only a cloth (lungi) about the loins.¹⁵⁰

The poor did not use shoes but, generally, went barefoot. Moreland says that he has not found a shoe mentioned anywhere north of the Narmada except in Bengal, and thinks that this was due to the high cost of leather. Then, as now,

145 Fransisco Pelsaert, *The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert* Edited by P.Geyl and W.H.Moreland, Idarah-I Adabiyat-I Delli, Delhi, 1972 (Reprint). p - 62.

146 Op., cit., Letter Received, VI, p. 187.

147 Ralph Fitch, ed. W. Foster, p. 22.

148 Op., cit., Moreland, 275.

149 Zahir –al –Din Muhammad Babur, *Baburnama*, Eng. Trans. By A.S. Bevridge in 2 Vols. Ist published 1922. New Delhi. 1970. reprint, p. 519.

150 Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari* Vol. I, translated by H.Blochmann, Delhi 1964 (Reprint). 1-389.

women both rich and poor wore jewellery profusely. As many travellers noted a man of quality would not move out in public without being attended by a train of attendants, pages and slaves. *Bernier* says for two or three who wear decent apparels, there may always be wretched seven or eight poor and ragged miserable beings.¹⁵¹

FOOD AND DRESS: The food pattern of the commoners can be viewed from the description of the food habit of kalketu (a contemporary commoner) by *Bengali* poet Mukundarama in his work as: pulse especially, masur, potato, bhat (boiled rice), amani (salt rice-water), and green vegetables. He further expresses in his poetry that curd and cheap sweets made of milk, jaggery and oilseeds which the poor could afford only on rare occasions such as festivals and marriages etc. Manrique described about common Bengali food, that, they generally took rice, and at the times the poor people got satisfied with rice and little salt, very few could afford milk and other milk products, and the fish were taken by the majority. Kondon was a kind of wild rice and sawan was the unhusked rice eaten by the poor.¹⁵² *Pelsaert* says that workmen 'know little of the taste of meat'. He goes on to say, 'for their monotonous daily food they have nothing but a little (*khichri*) made of green pulse mixed with rice eaten with butter in the evening, in the day time they munch a little parched pulse or other grain, *sattu*.¹⁵³ The food of the very poor is described as boiled rice, nichany (the Rgged millet) millet and grass roots on the western coast. In Bihar, they ate the pea like grains, which used to cause sickness.¹⁵⁴ Wheat was not, apparently, a part of the diet of the common people even in the wheat-producing region. In Malwa area, Terry says that 'the ordinary sort of people did not eat wheat, but used the flour of a coarser grain; made up in round, broad and thick cakes (*Chapatis*) which were wholesome and hearty.¹⁵⁵ Food grains were supplemented by herbs, beans and other vegetables.¹⁵⁶

151 Op., cit., *Bernier*, p.283.

152 *Sudama- Charit*, p,-13.

153 Op., cit., *Pelsaert* trans. Moreland and Gegl, pp. 60-61, Fryer, 11-119.

154 Op., cit., *Abul Fazl*, 1, 416.

155 *Terry*, *Voyage of East India*, reprint, London, 1777, pp. 87-119.

156 *Jean Baptiste Tavernier*, *Travels in India*, 2 Vols., English translation by V.Ball, London, 1889. *Tavernier*, 238.

But Irfan Habib, declares that even in the smallest village's sugar and other sweetmeats, dry and liquid, could be procured in abundance. It may be assumed that the *gur (jaggery)* was commonly consumed in the villages. Salt which was a government monopoly was twice as expensive in terms of wheat prices prevalent in the sixteenth century as compared with modern times Chillies or capsicums were unknown, cloves, pepper and cardamoms were obviously too expensive.¹⁵⁷ Fruits of the common kind, mangoes, melons, berries, coconut etc. were available to the poor in season.¹⁵⁸

It appears from contemporary accounts that the articles in the diet of the common people in most part of India consisted chiefly of rice, millets and pulses. In most parts of India, rice being the major crop, formed the staple diet of the masses. Millets of (Juwar and Bajra) held the same position in western India. *Irfan Habib* says that 'generally speaking, it was the lowest varieties out of his produce, which the peasant was able to retain for his own family'.¹⁵⁹

HOUSES: The housing pattern of the common people was far below that of aristocracy. Majority of the houses in Mughal period were made of mud and were very small, had thatched roofs and walls built in clay and straw. Pelsaerts described that some earthenware pots were used for cooking and keeping water in the house. He also writes that "Their bed clothes are scanty, nearly a sheet or perhaps two, serving both as under and over-sheets. This was sufficient in hot weather, but in bitter cold nights is miserable indeed, and they try to keep warm over litter cow dung fires which are bit outside doors."¹⁶⁰ The Hindu common houses with little or no furniture, floors made of *Pounded earth* and plastered with *cow-dung* have been noted by Manucci¹⁶¹, clay houses with straw – or palm leaves – roofs have been noted by Manrique in Bengal.¹⁶² And some houses were made of *bamboos*. *Reed-walls* were found in the huts of Orissa; but

157 Irfan .Habib, "*Currency System of the Mughais* ", Medieval Indian Quarterly, Aligarh Muslim University, Vol.IV, p, - 93.

158 Op., cit., Baburnama (ed). Beveridge, 303-13.

159 Op., cit., Irfan .Habib,

160 Jahangir's India, p. 61.

161 op., cit Manucci, Travels-p-246

162 Bengal Past and Present- vol XIII P I, 1916-P9.

generally there were thatched straw houses and every year the roofs were repaired before the rainy season.¹⁶³ Monserrate also found most of the houses low and flat-roofed. Unlike Terry, he saw houses which had windows to let in fresh air, although they were unglazed. According to Manucci, The houses of the common people in India, during period under review, were constructed of earth and pieces of wood bound together with ropes. The wooden posts served as supporting pillars and roofs were thatched. In the building of the entire house, not a single nail was ever used by them. The floors in the houses were made only on pounded earth "Spread over with a wash of cow's dung". The great majority of people in the country used this floor as their bedding and had no other mattress to lie upon.

The poor rural peasants lived in single-room houses made of mud with thatched roofs. The poor, sometimes, shared the room with their goat and cow, but the better sort would have a number of rooms, depending upon the size of their family, space for storing foodgrain and a walled courtyard. The rooms would not, generally, have any windows, the entrance sufficing for light and air. *Manrique* found that they were kept very clean with frequent plastering on the floor and walls with mud mixed with cow-dung. Regarding the use of cow-dung in poor as well as in rich houses and its antiseptic qualities see the accounts of *Manrique* and *Pietro-della-valle*. *Palsaert*, indeed, says that the poor use earthen pots even for cooking.¹⁶⁴

The common people's houses are built of mud with thatched roofs. Furniture there is little or none. Except some earthenware pots to hold water and for cooking there are two beds, one for the man, the other for his wife for here men and wife do not sleep together, but the man calls his wife when he wants her in the night and, when he has finished, she goes back to her place or bed. This is sufficient in the hot weather, but the bitter cold nights are miserable indeed, and they try to keep warm over little cow dung fires which are lit outside the doors, because the houses have no fire places or chimneys, the smoke from

163 *Achatanand Das, Haribamsa, Cuttak*), pp. 532 & 537, op., cit. *Monserrate : Commentary*, p. 81.

164 op., cit. *Palsaert trans. Moreland and Geyl*, p. 61.

these fires, all over the city, is so great that the eyes run, and the throat seems to be choked.¹⁶⁵

Manrique shows the vivid picture of poverty prevailing in India, during the 17th century. Those peasant villagers or cultivators who could not pay off the revenue, the Governor of the Province seized his wives and children, made them into slaves and sold them by auction.¹⁶⁶ *Hamilton* mentions that he was himself empowered to sell off the families of his creditors in Thatta without going to court.¹⁶⁷ During epidemic and famine, due to lack of authorities' financial assistance, the suffering people or public are compelled to sell their children and wives because of indebtedness which thus was responsible for considerable amount of slavery that was normally in existence.¹⁶⁸

STANDARD OF LIVING OF FOREIGNERS (PARTICULARLY BRITISHERS) IN INDIA

Although the Portuguese, the Dutch, the British and the French, came to India mainly on expression of the growing national desire for trade and commerce, but when they were able to establish their factory and warehouse in India, they became a part of Indian society. So, when we discuss the social structure of Indians during the Mughal period, the researcher also draws a brief picture of foreigners' living standard, particularly, of the Britishers, who stayed here for a long time.

Much before the foundation of the English East India Company, India had been visited by a number of English travellers like Thomas Stephens, Ralph Fitch, Newberry and Leeds. They were, essentially, the adventurers and came with that spirit. However, in 1599, John Mildenhall came during the time of Akbar. His object was to try to negotiate with the 'Great Mughal' some kind of commercial treaty or understanding which should be a basis for the English trade

165 op., cit W.H.Moreland, *Jahangir's India*, Delhi -1972, p -61.

166 Travels of Sebastian Manrique, Vol. 1, p. 53.

167 Op., cit., A. Hamilton, *East India*, Vol. 1, p. 121.

168 Op., cit., R. K. Mukherjee, *The Economic History of India, 1600-1800*, Allahabad, No. p. 72.

in India. However, more systematic attempts to open up trade with India were made during the time of Jahangir when Howkins, the envoy of the king of England, visited his court in 1609. Howkins met the Emperor at Agra and was given every assurance, regarding trade facilities to be provided to the English. During the reign of Jahangir, East India Company passed through many vicissitudes and pitfalls in order to establish its trade. Therefore, the commercial position of the English was far from satisfactory during Jahangir's time. However, in 1613, the conflict between the Portuguese and the English provided a suitable pretext to the English which considerably helped them in 'coming closer to the Mughal King' and thus acquiring trade concessions in India. By 1614, the factors opened the trade avenues at various places like Cambay, Baroda, Broach and Agra.

The commercial position of the English was, definitely, improved and further strengthened by the coming of Thomas Roe, a plenipotentiary of James I. A man of captivating presence yet firm and imperious as the occasion arose, his was the right choice of King of England. By the year 1618, the English company had established factories at Agra, Ahmedabad, Burhanpur and Surat. Surat was the first place where the English and the Dutch established their factories. The Presidency of Surat was esteemed superior to all others in India and was the Headquarter of the English trade from 1616 onwards.¹⁷⁰ The English factory at Surat was visited by a number of European travellers including Pietro Della Valle, Thomas Herbert, Tavernier, Mandelslo Bernier and Thevenot. But the detailed accounts of the every day life of the English men at Surat and the working of the factory can be found in the pages of John Fryer, English surgeon, at Bombay and Surat. John Fryer remarked that English factors began their day with prayers and then the business was transacted.

The English President managed the affairs of the Company with the help of 20 to 24 merchants and officers and had, under his superintendence, the factories at Ahmadabad, Agra, Baroda and Broach. The staff of the factories

169 Parmod Sangar, *The Socio-Economic History of Mughal India*, Chandigarh, 2003, p. 46.
170 John, *An Account of East India and Persia*, ed. R.C. Temple, vol. I, p.219.

consisted of President, Council ware-housekeeper, the secretary, senior factors, the Chaplin, the surgeon, the junior factors and the writers or apprentices. Dr. Fryer, eye witness to the day-to-day function of the English factors writes that the President had his own suite, “with noble rooms for council and entertainment and seldom dined in the hall”.¹⁷¹ Another important aspect noticed by a contemporary writer that the English factory was made like a college monastery, “a house under religious order than any offer”. The factors as at college in Oxford or Cambridge dined together in the hall and attended daily prayers in Chaupal, where discipline was strictly observed.

A list of the Presidents/ Chiefs of the English East India Company from 1613 -33 at Surat has been given below – (Based on the English Factories in India 1630 -33).

Thomas Aldnorth,	Was incharge of the Factory in 1613 after Best's Depart –Died at Nariad in 1615.
Thomas Keridge,	Appointed agent, February, 18, 1616.title changed to president. In 1618 or 1619 handed over charge in April, 1621.
Thomas Rastell,	President in April, 1621 sailed for England in April, 1618.
Richard Wylde,	Elected president Aprail 13, 1628. Sailed for England April 14, 1630.
John Skibbow,	Took over charge April 14, 1630.
Thomas Rastell,	Arrived from England as President September 26, 1930, Died November, 1631.

¹⁷¹ H.G. Rawlinson, *Life in an English Factory in India in the Seventeenth Century*, Proceedings of Indian Historical Records, Commission III, January 1921, pp. 21-25.

Joreph Hopkinson, Elected president December 29, 1631, Died,
towards end of 1633.

William methwold, Arrived as president November 7, 1633.

The company tried its best to repress all disorderly and unchristian behaviour.¹⁷² Ovington rightly remarked that “the agents and chiefs in their several factories take care to prevent all profane swearing and taking the name of God in vain by cursed oaths, all drunkenness and intemperance all fornication and unseemliness. The wrong doors were severely reprimanded for their rude behaviour and as punishments were sent to England by “the next ship”.The office of the President were of immense dignity and importance. He controlled all the English factories in western India, Persia and Bantam for a considerable time. The President was, usually, appointed from England and enjoyed great authority at the company’s headquarters. He received a salary of 500 pounds per annum. He served for three to five years.

At noon the office was closed and the factors retired to the dining hall. For the most part, the English enjoyed such food at Surat as they had in England. The food consisted of fine bread and wheat, beef, mutton, chicken meat of pigeons dressed by the English cooks in their own manner.¹⁷³ Dinner was a grand affair, Padre Ovington, a Priest who had, evidently, not learnt to abandon the pleasures of table, describes it with evident gusto and involvement. All the dishes and cups were of pure silver, massy and substantial. Before lunch, a large silver ewer and basin for washing hands was taken round by a peon. Indian, Portuguese and English cooks were employed so as to “please the curiosity of every palate”. Ovington further goes on to add that pilaus (pulao), cabab, curries with plenty of chutneys and relishes, fowl stewed in butter and stuffed with almonds mud misins “were ordinary dishes”. This was washed down with plenty of generous shiraj wine and arrack punch served round the table. On Sundays and other holidays, the meal was made more large and splendid.

172 H.G. Rawlinson (ed.), John Ovington, *Voyage of Surat in the year 1689*.

173 Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, 1608-67*, Cambridge, 1907, p. 27.

Peter Mundy also mentions that, occasionally, the English had at their table served the flesh of fowls, antelopes and perchance of wild bear. Occasionally, however, they had dopiaza and rice, khichri and pickled mangoes.¹⁷⁴ The recipe for dopiaza is mentioned in *Ain-i-Akbari* the author further added that the English use arrack for strong drink and beer made of sugar. Sometimes they used a composition of arrack, water, sugar and lime juice which was called *chrebockbsa (char-bakbra)*, four portions (divisions) and then the loyal toasts, the king and the company were drunk by all.¹⁷⁵ After lunch, all retire for the afternoon. Work started again at four. At six, the factory was cleared for outsiders and the gates were opened at dawn the following morning.

Fruits: Persian fruits such as apricots, plums and cherries were also enjoyed by the English. This was followed by a collection of fruits and preserves after which they bathed in a tank or cistern with water in it, water five feet deep.

Drinking: European wines and bottled beer were also added and served with regularity. A wealthy, Indian who sometimes ate at the factory premises, was pleasantly surprised to know that sometime the total ran to sixteen courses.¹⁷⁶ We learn from a letter of 1671 that in an English factory in India drinking was favourite pastime. The usual drink was 'Pouleponge' or Punch arrack,¹⁷⁷ a spirit distilled from molasses, mixed with lemon juice, water and nutmeg. It was very pleasant to taste although hurtful to body and health.¹⁷⁸ Along with this they were very fond of Shiraz and European wines. Ovington, in his voyage, gives a long and interesting account of the public table at the English factor, where all the factors sat down with the President and senior merchants and dined off in dishes of pure, massive silver containing viands prepared by three different cooks – English, Portuguese and Indian and drank the most expensive wines from Europe.¹⁷⁹

174 Mundy, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

175 John Albert de Mandelslo, *Mandelslo's Travels in Western India*, Edited by M.S.Commissariat, London, 1931. p.53.

176 H.G. Rawlinson (ed.), John Ovington, *Voyage to Surat in the Year 1689*, pp. 230-231.

177 *The Annals of English Settlements in Bihar*, p. 57.

178 Francios Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire*, translated & Edited by Archibald Constable, 1656-68, Delhi, 1972. Reprint. p. 141.

179 Ibid., 230-31.

Surat castle “well walled ditched, seasonable, great and faire with number of faire pieces of ordnance, where of some of exceeding greatness. Before this lyeth a pleasant green in midst of which is a may pole to hang a light on and all sound” “very many noble lofty houses, flat at topp and terraced and plaster”. The road led through the gardens of the city, which lay outside the city walls. In these the Indian merchants wandered on warm evenings “to take the air and feast in pleasant summer houses” There were many fountains and rivulets of fresh water and “Grottoes descending underground by huge, arches and stone steps shaded by trees on each hand. The traveller reached at last the English factory and must have felt a sober satisfaction to note that it was built of stone and excellent Timber with wood curving without Representations, very strong for that each floor is half a yard thick at least, of the best cement, very weighty... with upper and lower Galleries or Tesras walks. The President had spacious Lodging with noble Rooms for counsel and Entertainment.

According to John Fryer, “The President at Surat had a large commission and vice (President) had a counsel also, and a guard when he walked or rode aboard, accompanied with a party of horse, which were constantly kept in the stables, either for pleasure or service, he had his Chaplins, physician, servants his linguist and a mint master. At meals he had his trumpets usher in his coures and soft music at the table; he went sometimes in his coach drawn by large milk white oxen, sometimes on horse back; otherwise in Palanquin, carried by cohorts (Khars), Mussleman Porters”.¹⁸⁰

The English factors serving in East India Company tried to follow the Indian practice at meal times. They washed their hands before and after the meals. They considered this necessary due to ‘decency’ and also on account of the heat and dust which were so troublesome. The company at Surat had engaged Indian, Portuguese and English cooks who prepared meals suiting different tastes. The Indian cooks prepared Pulao which was boiled so artistically that every grain ‘lies singly without being cooked together, with spices inter-mint’. Another Indian preparation relished by the Englishmen was dampukht, i.e. ‘air-

¹⁸⁰ John Fryer, *A New Account of East India & Persia, being Nine Years. Travels*, 3 Vols., Edited by William Crooke, London, 1909. Vol. I, p.178.

cooked'. It was 'boned and stuffed with raisins and almonds. They also liked Kabab, which was beef or mutton cut into small pieces or sprinkled with pepper. They had also pickles made of bamboo or mango or soya sauce. Ovington remarks that the people of Surat were fond of asafoetida which they, occasionally, intermixed with chapatis. Because of its beneficial effects, the Englishmen felt tempted to taste it at times.¹⁸¹ They used it as a cure against wind at the stomach in spite of its 'stinging savour'.¹⁸² The English used sometimes a composition of araq, water, sugar and lime-juice, called char-bakhra.¹⁸³ It seems to correspond to Mandelslo's Palepuntz' (Pal Punch), which was a kind of drink consisting of aqua vitae, rose-water, juice of citrons and sugar.¹⁸⁴ Another important past time which the English enjoyed, remarked Mandelslo, was shooting butts or targets, at which Mandelslo, showed him so expert that he was able to pocket a hundred mahmudis or five pounds sterling every week. Britishers bathed in a tank with water in it five feet deep. They also enjoyed the full pleasure of picnics. This aspect of Surat provides us with a sanguine picture of factory life in India.

But the tenure of President John Wylde (1628-30) was the period of degradation. During this period, the discipline in Britishers was poor. Prayers were neglected, Sundays were spent in feasting, drinking and gambling and the "beastly sin of whereon and most polluted filthy talk daily common discourse at meals were rife". Bribes were freely taken by authorities. Dennis Kincaid described about the curious habits and odd behavior so faithfully, affectionately and humorously, the general story of British social life in India.¹⁸⁵ Dennis Kincaid has given that it was real pleasure to visit the open country; (Villages) as the entire Senario remembered him of the English fields, richly cultivated farm-lands and, further decorating with the presence of large number of Pea –cocks which clustered round the stagragent pool –watching the Camels moving ferkiling in the

181 *A Voyage to Surat*, p. 231.

182 William Foster(ed.), *Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East*, 1602-17, 6 Vols., 1602-13 (1st Volumes), Edited by Federick Charles Danvers, London, 1869-1906. Vol. I, p. 31.

183 Op., cit., Peter Mundy, Vol. II, p. 28.

184 Op., cit., Mandelslo, Ed. Commirariat, p. 4.

185 Dennis Kincaid, *British Social Life in India*, Bombay– 1973 2nd Edition. James Lunt – Introduction P-XX

shadow of dusty Palm groves. He corroborates further that the roads were shady with over arching banana trees and the travellers could remark.¹⁸⁶

Kincaid has also given an eloquent testimony regarding the grand style of living enjoyed by the president of East India Company. He was of the opinion that the head of factory was styled as and lived in a luxurious manner like the Mughal governor. Outside the door of his bed chamber stood servants with silver plates and when he appeared they followed him from room to room. He went downstairs a picket of liveried guardsmen sprang to attention in the hall and if he left the factory "Bandarines and moors fewer than two standards marched before him". He was provided with "well filled stables for pleasure or services" and he had his own chaplain, physician, surgeon, linguist and mint-master. At his entry into the dining room trumpets blew and while he sat at the table violins played softly. All the English merchants dine of together in the hall of factory, the president at the head of the table and the others seated in order of seniority. On certain church festivals, however, they dined in the gardens outside the city. They went in solemn procession, the president and his lady in palanquin with banners ahead, the council in ox-drawn coaches of special splendour, each having "a four square seat, inlaid with Ivory", and the other factors on Arab horses whose saddles were of embroidered velvet and whose headstalls, rings and cruppers were of solid silver. All the dishes and drinking vessels were of massive silver. Each dinner was attended by a page with silver basin and ever, so that he might wash both before and after the meal, the Peculiarly English grace.¹⁸⁷ English President lived in a great style and was assisted by a retinue of servants and other factors. The English and the Dutch had the spacious and well-built houses, known as lodges and accommodated different categories of factors including that of the President. In the evening, several of the English factors came to convey him to supper-hall, where, assembled about a dozen merchants along with other mangers. They all sat down to dinner, with the exception of the President and were served with about fifteen or sixteen dishes of meat besides the dessert.¹⁸⁸

186 Ibid, p -10 -11.

187 Ibid, p – 12.

188 Op., cit., M.S. Commissariat, Mandelslo's Travels in Western India, p. 8.

On the holidays the factors amused themselves with archery and musket –shooting; or they would stroll sound the bazaar, the temples and old palaces. They admired the earnest attachment of Hindus to their guilt and reverent worship (or decent cringing” as Mr. Hamilton put it). But the extravagances of the yogis excited their laughter and exasperation. “I have seen a fanciful Rascal”, exclaimed Mr. Hamilton, “Seven foot high with a large Turban of his own hair Wreathed about his Head, and his Body bedaubed with Ashes and water, sitting quite naked under the shade of a tree, with pudenda like an Ass.” And if they chanced upon a conjurer in a corner of the bazaar they could not resist joining his audience. Then as now the mock trick was a popular feature of the performance. Dr. Fryer relates how he saw some conjurers present a Mock-creature of a Mango-Tree, arising from the stone in a short space (which they did in Hugger Mugger, being very graceful to avoid being discovered) with fruit Green and Ripe; so that a man must stretch his fancy, to imagine it witchcraft; though the common sort think no less.¹⁸⁹

Instead of attending the president’s sermon the young factors preferred to spend their time with their fighting cocks; especially imported from Siam, or with their other pets with which the factory was crowded. They were less interested in pomp and ceremony than in comfort and while the officials stationed at Swally, the port of Surat, had been formerly satisfied with tents they now demanded bungalows. Private rooms began to be furnished with an elegance that disturbed the directors, and what was to be said of Mr. Young who sat up till two or three” “in the night and drinking of health.”¹⁹⁰

The uniform of one’s servants was an important matter and even visitors had to decide how they would dress their retainers – Sir Thomas Roe, after some thought, chose for his servants an elaborate outfit, including “red taffeta cloaks guarded with green taffeta” as the proper dress for an English ambassador to the Great Mogul. The extravagance of European costume, the ruffs” of twelve, yea sixteen lengths, set three or four times double”, the stashed silks and heavy folds of lace, always impressed Indians with awe. A. Mogul

189 Ibid, p, - 16.

190 Ibid, p, - 22.

noble inquired politely if Dr. Fryer slept in those grand clothes of his; and when an English mission visited the Maratha Court, their enormous Caroline wigs caused a sensation. At the sight of them, the king stopped his palanquin and begged the foreigners to come nearer so that he could feel with his own fingers those prodigious ringlets. Considering that his interview took place in the middle of the hot weather it is difficult not to admire the stoic endurance of those English envoys, sacrificing all comfort in their determination to do their country credit by their fashionable appearance.¹⁹¹

It is believed much of mutual understanding and liking can be attributed to our ability to communicate with each other. All educated Indians speak English, while many of them have a better knowledge of English literature than most of us. The British Raj is now history but there is still a sizeable British community in India, businessmen, diplomats, voluntary workers, missionaries, as well as the fast diminishing number of pensioners who choose to retire in India when their active career was ended, partly because they had lost touch with their own country, and partly because they loved India so much.

There is no larger wishful thinking about some kind of special relationship, “but there are many reminders of our former connection with each other. Restaurants specializing in Indian cuisine have sprung up all over Britain, while in India cooks in P.W.D. bungalows throughout the length and breadth of the land still firmly cling to the old menus. The British visitor, unless well advised to selected local dishes, can still expect to be served with brown Windsor soup, roast chicken and caramel custard.

THE INTEREST OF FOREIGNER IN LAYING GARDENS: In the 17th century even the foreign merchants belonging to the English, the Dutch and the Portuguese companies and developed a special taste and aptitude for laying out gardens in their settlements. In Goa, for example, the Portuguese settlers had their own gardens; but for the most part they had let the same to the local Canarese. These gardens and orchards were watered by canals and had pretty alleys and tunnels set off with fountains and grouters, as witnessed by Pyrad de

191 Ibid, p- 22

Lavel.¹⁹² In the Portuguese territory of Bassein, Careri found in an area of about 15 miles delightful gardens, planted with several sorts of country fruits like Palm, figs and Mangoes. In the Jesuit Church garden, besides European fruits, there were also fig trees and grape vines which yielded fruits twice in a year, in December and March.¹⁹³

Pietra Della Valle first tasted Indian fruits in Daman in the house of the Father Ractor. They included *paniya*, *caju*, *giambi*, *mango* and *annanas*. Papiya was little esteemed in India; Annanas was just liked a little, regarded as hot though good for promoting digestions.¹⁹⁴ Similarly, the English merchants here liked to grow fruit trees in the territories where they lived. Round about Madras, for example, they had gardens in which, besides vegetables, there were fruit trees like coco, guava, pear, jack, mangoes, plums and pomegranates.¹⁹⁵ In 1672, President Aungier of the East India company at Surat, had provisions sent from there to Bombay, among them being garden seeds and springs of lemon trees to be sown and planted there. He wrote to the Company at London requesting for seeds and spring of other trees as well.¹⁹⁶

192 *The Voyage of Francois Pyrad of Lavel*; Tr. & ed. Gray, 1887 –1890, II, p.28.

193 *Indian Travels of Careri*, ed. S.N. Sen, National Archives of India, New Delhi 1949, pp - 168 -69.

194 Op., cit., *Pyrad of Lavel –II*, pp -69 -70.

195 Fryer, John, *A New Account of East India and Persia*, ed. Crooks, London. 1905. 1915. Op. cit., *English Settlements in India* By wheller, J.K., p -58.

196 *The English Factories in India*, ed. William Foster, 1670 -77., p -57.

CHAPTER – 2

POSITION OF WOMAN

Man-woman relationship is the basic and essential human relationship. Both compliment each other and make life meaningful. Since time immemorial, men and women have lived together, worked together, produced children and taken care of them, whether they lived in caves during the food gathering stage or whether they lived in village communities during the agrarian stage of humanity.

Gender relation refers to the relationship between two separate sexes in a particular environment. Ever since the existence of mankind, irrespective of the place or environment, we notice problems at this front, our effort has been made in this chapter to deal the position of the woman from the point of view of various social disabilities prevailed the society during these times. They have been sharing an equal burden may be more at times than men, but without getting a reward or recognition, whether at home or outside. We find women working shoulder to shoulder with men, at all times of our existence right from the pre-historic times. They looked after the family, did the household chore and even made earning to the family income, but seldom got credit for it. Whether it is because of the patriarchal form of our society, which framed social customs to suit the convenience of males or it is the physical superiority of the males as a species. The consequences, invariably, are the same – The suppression of women's rights.

In Patriarchal societies all over the world and India, in particular, an elderly male member of the family is considered to be the “Head of the household”. A male symbolizes power and authority in the household structure, while a women, by and large, is treated as subordinate to the male in her various roles as wife, sister, daughter, and even mother. The male is expected to protect and look after the family. As head of the household, he assumes responsibility

for the social, physical and integrative needs of the households. On the other hand, the woman had the primary responsibility of carrying out domestic chores like fetching fuel and water, cooking, washing, cleaning and sweeping floors, nursing the children and the sick.¹ The women were also required to nurse the sick and, in the process, also handle their soiled clothes without being aware of the implications.

Women are mothers and wives; women do the working, mending, sewing and washing. They take care of men and are subordinate to male authority, but they are largely excluded from high status occupation and position of power. These generalizations apply, to some degree, practically to every known human society.

The best way to understand the spirit of a civilization and to appreciate and realize its excellence is to study the history of its women folk and the superior status enjoyed by them during the Vedic age, *D. N. Mitter* writes, "Women held an honoured position in the Vedic age and were quite competent to take part in every aspect of the social, intellectual and spiritual life of the race."¹ Girls were educated like boys and had to pass through a period of Brahmacharya. The role of women as a wife, mother, sister and a widow has been dealt with and written about by many learned scholars, although women played a vital role in the development of our land and society intellectually, economically and culturally. *Ghosha, Gargi and Vachakanvi* aspired for knowledge. These women walked side by side of men chalking out the destiny of their land and enriching its culture.

As pointed by *Prof. A.S. Altekar* in his book "The position of women in Hindu civilization" During Vedic period, she were mostly engaged in military or semi –military activities for the security to the country. As a result, their dependence on women folk increased for the latter took on active and equal part in the agricultural activities and manufacture of war material like bows and arrows. Vedic literature refers to female workers who specialized in dying,

¹ Altekar, A. S. *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization 1938*, pp. 600-01.

embroidery and basket making etc. They not only faced the onslaught of invading army but served as efficient bodyguards to the sovereigns of renowned dynasties.

The scenario would have been healthier. Both Orientlists and Modern historians had laid out a historiography scheme in the 19th century, where women were in the higher pedestal. *Gargi* and *Matitreyee*, for example, in the ancient period were recognized as a Brahmbadinis (enlightened women) whose erudition was supposed to have granted them equal powers as their male counterparts.² Their position was one of authority and honour. In the Vedic and epic period, wife was considered to be ornament of the house or Nucleus.³ Though during the period that followed the Vedic age, there was gradual deterioration in the position of women but she still retained a large measure of freedom in the disposal of her own person and fortune.⁴

Throughout the medieval period, it has been evident that the women in India, belonging to the Hindu or Muslim cults, were mainly molested by males. In the post independent period, the Muslim women were nowhere –got no education and were veiled under Purda with less social security etc. All over the country, women are mostly dominated by males. The Hindu or the Muslim in the villages bear little medical facility for pregnancy and post natal care etc. the infanticide (in case of female birth) are a common scenario. In the pre marriage period, they were not given freedom to choose their partner. Criminalities often are unheard by law due to fear of the village people and social communication gap between the jurisdiction and people. The people feared to oppose against the gesture and, therefore, they did not have judicial co-operation. Rituals become the law and women become victims.⁵ However, some aspects that throw light on gender relations has, generally, been ignored even in studies that

2 Ratnabali Chatterjee, *Veiled and Unveiled: Women in Medieval India* Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 62nd Session Bhopal 2001, p.161.

3 P. N. Chopra, *Life and Letters under the Mughals*, Delhi 1956 p. 86.

4 R. C. Majumdar, (ed.) *The Vedic Age*, Bharatiya Bombay, Fifth Edition 1988. pp.512-13.

5 IHC Proceedings, 61st (millennium) session, 2001, *Women Ritual Domination and Law*, Alok Kumar Maitra, p -1338.

highlighted different forms of violence and social neglect concerning women. The chapter, therefore, focuses on the systematic disadvantages of women in India. The incidence of diseases was, generally, greater in women as compared to men. Significantly, as a result of general improvement in health and sanitation, the gap between the male and the female went up.

The patriarchal system enforced the norm of complementary of sex roles. The men were the earners and the decision-makers; they exercised control over financial and social matters; there was little participation of men and women in each other's spheres in both urban and rural areas. With the general acceptance of polygamy and remarriage of widow, at least among the upper classes, a large segment of the society, a woman was implicitly dispensable. Moreover, compared to their men folk, women could benefit much less from inoculation. This was as much due to the ignorance as to the general disregard for women's health. The upper classes brought in also the question of 'Honour' and 'custom'. The elite among both Hindus and Muslims forbade their women to get inoculated. The Rajputs believed that exposing their women violated the Purdah and would make their daughter's marriage difficult. The Sayyids believed that their religion forbade women to get inoculated by men.

Various incidents of molestation of women were reported. The people reacted sharply to the measures involving the handling of women. A Brahman was warned, threatened and served a legal notice as he prevented the medical staff from removing his ailing mother to the camp. Ultimately, he was allowed to keep his mother in the house only. The people of Indian society considered it tantamount to their sexual molestation if woman was touched by the male. In sum as the crisis situations, epidemics provided a mirror to the systemic disadvantages of women. The patriarchal social structure confined women to the roles that steadily exposed them to disease and then deprived them of access to medical facilities. In this way, it is clear that the patriarchal nation's society, at large, did not always consider women's health a matter of equal concern. In this situation, a large number of women lost their lives due to epidemics and a larger

number suffered from insensitive handling, lost personal dignity and even honour.

INHERITANCE: While a son lives, no other relation or kinsman shares the estate except the wife who is equal to the son. If there be neither son nor wife, the unmarried daughter inherits. If there be also no daughter, the mother is the heir. If there be no mother, the father takes possession. If there be no father alive, his brother shall be heir. In default of a brother, the brother's son inherits. In default of a brother's son, the estate is divided amongst the surviving kindred. If he leaves no relations, the teacher inherits or in default of the teacher, his fellow pupils. In the absence of the above, all their estate lapses to the crown.

“So far as property rights were concerned, Mohammedan ladies were much better than their Hindu sisters. A Mohammedan lady was entitled to a definite share in the inheritance. A daughter was absolutely assured of one-half of a son's share of an inheritance with absolute right to dispose of it. Under all conditions, women received a half share.” But on the other hand, her Hindu sister retained this right even after marriage. Another method adopted to safeguard the interests of Muslim ladies after marriage was ante nuptial settlement, whereas a Hindu lady had no right to the property of her husband's parents. Wherever, under Islam, women of a deceased husband's property, the wife received $\frac{1}{8}$ if there were children, $\frac{1}{4}$ if there were none, and with right to dispose of as she pleases”.

A Hindu lady was entitled to maintenance and residence expenses, besides movable property like ornaments, jewellery, costly apparel, etc. About the immovable property, “No property in land admits of disputes concerning them. The slavery, to which the rights of Parents and husband subject the female, abolishes, at once, all fruits of dowry, divorce, jointures and settlements”.

It appears that the constant seclusion brought about the social, political and intellectual stultification of women who could not exert themselves for their legitimate rights. From the legal standpoint, they were reduced to a position of dependency in every sphere of life. Indian women, mostly, confined themselves

to household work. Those belonging to the agricultural and labouring classes helped their men folk on their home industries, agriculture, breeding of animals, spinning, weaving, tailoring⁶ etc. Some women engaged themselves in independent professions like medicine, midwifery and the like. The women at Surat earned money by knitting woollen and silken fabrics, some of them took up dancing and singing as a profession. "Moors and Bengalese take great delight in having women dance before them who are kept for that purpose and are educated from their infancy in the pursuit of this function. They were extremely supple and were adepts in the art of dancing".⁷

MOTHERHOOD: In society, the position of mother was most respectable. Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said, "Paradise lies at the feet of the mother". The contemporary records show that the Mughal kings had utmost regard for their mothers. It has been found from the contemporary records that Mughal kings used to move through some stages to receive their mothers. They would perform *Kornish*, *Sijdah* and *Taslim*, when entering their presence.⁸ Babur had great affection for his step grand mother, aunts and other elderly lady of harem. From *Ain-i-Akbari*, it appears that on his birth day the Mughal Emperor, accompanied by Princes and Nobles would necessarily pay a visit to his mother to receive her felicitations and present her with rare gifts.⁹ Sometimes, the weighting ceremony was held in her palace.¹⁰ *Jahangir* writes in *Tuzuk*, "I went to meet my mother at *Dhar* (near Lahore) and performed *Kornish*, *Sijdah* and *Taslim* with all obedience and then took leave of her."¹¹ The Mughals brought their own traditions and culture. Hamayun had a great regard for the ladies. He was particularly fond of his sisters whom he often remembered during his illness.¹² Akbar and Jahangir, both used to pay respect to the ladies. Shahjahan

6 Jean Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, 2 Vols., English translation by V. Ball, London, 1889. II P-127.

7 Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. III, translated by H.S. Jarret and revised by Jadunath Sarkar, Calcutta, 1896 and 1948. p-257.

8 Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol. I, translated by Alexander Rogers & Henry Beveridge, London, 1909-1914. p. 62.

9 Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari* Vol. I, translated by H. Blochmann, Vol. I, p. 256.

10 P. N. Chopra, *Some Aspects of Society and Culture During the Mughal Age*, p. 120.

11 Ibid.

12 Gulbadan Begum, *Humayunama* A.S. Beveridge trans. London, 1902. p. 104.

had much regard for the ladies. The only lady who seems to have enjoyed respect as well as affection of Aurangzeb was Jahanara Begum.

The Rajput mothers also had much honourable position in the society. Rajputs had great regard for their mothers; *Rana Sangram Singh II* of Mewar had made it a principle to pay his respect to his mother every morning before taking his meals. He would never like to act against the will of his mother, however unreasonable it might have been.¹³ Traveller Bartolomeo notices with appreciation the great respect paid to a pregnant woman; not only her husband and relations, but all the inhabitants to the place belonging to her caste prayed for her health and safety. According to him; they considered pregnancy as a very distinguished proof of the blessing of Goddess Lakshmi.¹⁴

UNWELCOMED DAUGHTER: The birth of a daughter was not welcomed with the same joy as that of a son.¹⁵ The birth of a daughter was regarded as inauspicious. It appears from the account of foreign travellers that even in the royal family the difference was clear and well-marked. Manucci writes that only women rejoiced and feasted on the birth of a daughter. While the whole court took part in the celebrations, if a prince was born.¹⁶ Akbar had resolved within himself that if "Almighty God should bestow a son on him, he would go on foot from Agra to *Saint Muin-ud-din Chisti's* mausoleum a distance of about 140 kos".¹⁷

CHILD MARRIAGE: Child marriage was a part of Indian social life, not even in Mughal India but it exists since ancient period. Generally, boys at the age of 15 or 16, and girls at nine or ten¹⁸ were wedded and this was the custom for both Hindus and Muslims. Fitch, writes, "We found marriages in great store both in

13 Tod, Col. James. *The Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, ed. by Crooke. Oxford, 1920, Vol. I, p. 479.

14 Bartolemlo Fra Paolino Da San, *A Voyages to the East Indies*, Trans. William Johnston Holborn, PP-253-54.

15 S. P. Sehgal, *Economic and Social Life in India in the first half of the 17th Century*, p. 242.

16 Niccolao Mannucci, *Storia do Mogor* (1653-1708) translated & Edited by William Irvine, 4 Vols., London, 1907-08. II, p. 356.

17 Op., cit., *Tuzuk-I-Jahangiri*, Roggers and Bev, Trans. Vol. I, pp. 1-2.

18 William Foster, (ed.), *Early Travels in India 1583-1619*, Delhi, 1968 (Reprint). Pp. 16 -18.

towns and villages in many places where we passed, of boys of eight or ten years and girls of five or six years old. They lie not together until they be ten years old.¹⁹

Manucci refers to the situation among Hindus where their daughters are married before they learnt to talk.²⁰ He mentions that the Brahman's daughters got married at the age of four or five, and not above ten years of age. *Pelsaert* Writes, "The hindus join their children in marriage at the age of only four or five years. *Manucci*, noted that girls getting married and giving birth to child even at the age of nine. *Careri*, referring, the Mehomentan Indian marry very young, but the Idolators at all ages. *Thevenet* – Referring Baglana province lying between Khan -desh and Surat the early marriages in this province, and make them Cohabit much sooner than they do in many places of the India; they celebrate matrimony at the age of four, five or six years, and suffer them to bed together when the husband in ten years old and the wife eight; but the women who have children so young soon leave of child bearing, and commonly do not conceive after thirty years of age, but become extremely wrinkly; and therefore there are places in the Indies where the young married couple are not suffered to eye together, before the man be fourteen years old".

Abul Fazl, "In the extensive country of India men are achive to form this union at a tender age and this introduces the heaven of evil.²¹ He refers to the marriage of Prince Murad, at the age of Seventeen on the 15th May, 1587 A.D. AT the age of sixteen, Prince Salim got married to the daughter of Raja Bhagwan Dass. *Manucci*. Writes that the young princes were brought up in the palace up to the age of sixteen years and then they were to be married.²² Hindus, as a protection against Muslim raiders, who would not usually carry of married women, resorted to early marriage of their daughters. It also acted as a safeguard against vices and helped the bride to know her husband before

19 Fransisco Pelsaert, *The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert* Edited by P.Geyl and W.H.Mofeland, Delhi, 1972 (Reprint). P. 84.

20 Ibid,

21 op., cit., *Ain -I*, P-791

22 op., cit., *Storia -II* P-347

physical consummation.²³ European travellers write about the early marriages of young girls.²⁴ Manucci, writes that “They married their girls even before they were able to speak”, and married before the age of ten years. According to Thevenot at the age of 4, 5 or 6 years, while Tavernier puts the marriage age at 7 or 8.

DOWRY: In Muslim society, the marriage had to be settled on hearsay reports with an advantage to the bride’s parents who had an opportunity to see and satisfy themselves about the boy, if they so desired. Dowry was demanded and sometimes parents disregarded the suitability of the match and cared primarily for a rich dowry. In some castes and localities the bridegroom had to pay money to the bride’s guardians.²⁵ Money played an important part when a marriage was arranged between persons of unequal ages²⁶ or social status.²⁶ Sometimes for the sake of wealth a young man would marry a woman older than himself. In some cases betrothals were fixed, as we see even today, among the rural folk before the actual birth of their children, it” death and sex disapproves not.²⁷

Akbar tried in vain to bring home to his people that the consent of the bride and bridegroom as well as permission of the parents was essential before the confirmation of the engagement.²⁸ *Bernier* rightly remarks that many girls would have led a happy married life, if their parents had connected them with a family less noble than their own.²⁹ Hamida Banu’s attitude in this respect is admirable. She declined to enter into matrimonial alliance with a monarch exclaiming. “I would rather marry a man whose label I can hold than one whose pedestal I cannot reach”.

Whatever might have been to respective positions of wife and husband, it is a fact beyond dispute that most of the Hindus managed to lead a happy

23 op., cit., Tavernier, XXIV, P-181

24 op., cit., Storia. III, PP-59-60.

25 op., cit., Storia III P-55.

26 Ibid.

27 op., cit., *Early Travels* P-221.

28 op., cit., *Ain –I*, p-277.

29 Francios Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire*, translated & Edited by Archibald Constable, 1656-68, Delhi, 1972. Reprint. P-259.

domestic life. The woman adorned her husband, rendered her all tenderness and protection. As a natural consequence, the true love and affection of the husband to his wife was unending. He would stick to monogamy and seldom fall a victim to adultery.³⁰ Tavernier rightly observes: "Banias (Hindus, when married are seldom untrue to their wives."³¹ He would address her as "O Thou of our son, I desire not paradise itself, if there are not satisfied. It was a love reciprocated. The result was a happy conjugal life in most cases. According to Ovington, sometimes the husband would burn themselves with their wives out of sheer love".³² "Force is not applied as they say, and it may be true at least in the countries where Mohammedan commands, for there no woman is suffered to be burnt without leave of the governor of the place of whom it belongs if not to examine whether the deal of money."³³

Prevalence of dowry system was of common practice among the well-to-do. Dowry was taken before marriage – the customary pan or tilak, or the later development of dahej or Javtaka. This dowry system is referred by Dvija Madhava, Mukundaram, Achutananda Das in Orissa. It included jewels, ornamented furniture, land, domestic animals, servants etc. We have the records of foreign travellers and writers noting this system in Mughal India. This was the situation, where the bride's parents give dowry to the bridegroom there are instances where the parents of the bridegroom give dowry to the bride, popularly known as pan. At times brides were purchased. Manucci notes, "It is not uncommon for a husband to buy his wife", and in that case the bridegroom loses the earnest money if he refused to marry the girl, or the bride's parents return double the amount taken to the groom if the bride refuses to marry him. Badooni notes that Raja Bhagwan Das paid two crores of tankas (rupees), horses elephants, golden vessels set with jewels, golden utensils etc.-all in huge amount -when his daughter got married to prince Salim.

30 op., cit., Tavernier, III, P-181.

31 Ibid.

32 John Ovington, *A Voyage to Surat in the year 1689*, Edited by H.G.Rawlinson, London, 1929. PP-331,343.

33 Pietro Della Valle, *The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in Indies*, Edited by Edward Gray, 2 V ols., 1892. P-85: *Storia II*, P-156.

Analysing the root cause of this evil he further writes: "Many persons whom I then consulted on the subject would have persuaded me that excess of affections was the root-cause. Why those women burn themselves with their deceased husbands, but I soon found that this abominable practice is the effect of early and deeply rooted prejudices. Every girl is taught by her mother that it is virtuous and laudable in a wife to mingle her ashes with those of her husband and no women of honour will refuse compliance with the established custom. Manucci, Thevenot and Caveri also refer to this custom".³⁴

The Mughal emperors, particularly Akbar and Aurangzeb, tried to abolish this custom. Akbar issued orders that no woman should be forced to go through this custom against her will. He also banned the burning of young Hindu widows of tender age. Sometime he personally interfered to stop it from taking place. The extraordinary custom of the women burning themselves with their deceased husbands has not for the worst part fallen into desuetude in India nor was it ever reckoned a religious duty as has been very erroneously supposed in the west. "This species of barbarity like many others rose originally from the foolish enthusiasm of feeble minds".

In a text in the Vedas conjugal affection and fidelity are thus, figuratively, inculcated. "The woman in short, who dies with her husband, shall enjoy life eternal with him in heaven". From this source the Brahmins themselves deduce this ridiculous custom which a more rational solution of it, than the story which prevails in Europe; that it was a political institution, made by one of the Emperors, a practice in those days, common Hindustan.³⁵

DIVORCE AND RE-MARRIAGE: Divorce³⁶ and re-marriages, common among Muslims, were prohibited to Hindu women. The Hindu husband could remarry³⁷ in certain circumstances, as on the death of his wife or if she proved to be

34 Op., cit., Storia III, p. 60.

35 Alexander Dow (Trans. from Persian), *The History of Hindustan*, Vol. I, Sonapat, India, 2003, p.8.

36 op., cit., *Ain-I-*(1873) –P-277.

37 op., cit., Della, Valle (Ed) Edward Grey I-PP-82-83.

barren³⁸ Historian *Altekar* observes, 'No divorce was allowed, even if the husband is a moral wreck or grievously ill treated his wife³⁹. Even if the Husband died, the woman had no choice even if she is desired to remarry, nor could she find any of her own races who would take her, because she would be accounted as bad, as infamous in desiring a second marriage⁴⁰

Widow re-marriage, custom suffered little change during the Mughal days and was even more rigorously enforced. Hindu ladies, according to Ovington, disliked and abhorred the very idea of remarrying and preferred to maintain their fidelity even after the death of their husband⁴¹ caste as being afraid of death⁴² The very few who desired to remarry, disregarding the custom, were turned out of their caste and community and finding it impossible to find a husband in their own community had "recourse to Christians and Mohammedans. According to Ovington some times Brahmans left large amounts of money for the maintenance of their widow⁴³ Widow re-marriage was allowed by Mohammedan law and was practiced by the rich and the poor alike.

WIDOWHOOD: It seems that divorce and remarriages, common among Muslims, were prohibited to Hindu women. A reference in *Ain-I Akbari* shows that high dowries no doubt prevented rash divorces but Akbar disapproved high dowries.⁴⁴

Manucci tells that Kshatriya women were burnt even against their wishes;⁴⁵ he himself rescued one such woman who was eventually married to his European friend. Nicolaocounti informs us that financial pressure was often exercised, the widow being informed that she would lose her sight to stridhana if she decided to survive.⁴⁶ Bernier has narrated the pathetic case of a child widow

38 John Albert de Mandelslo, *Mandelslo's Travels in Western India*. Edited by M.S.Commissariat, London, 1931. P-52

39 op., cit., *Altekar*, P-102

40 op., cit., Della Valle, (Edward Grey), I-PP-82-83.

41 op., cit., Ovington, PP-323-24.

42 op., cit., *Storia*, III, P-60

43 Jean De Thevenot, Account of India in Indian travels of Thevenot and Careri trans. And ed. S.N. Sen, National Archives of India, New Delhi, Pt-III P-84

44 op., cit., *Ain-I-Akbari*, vol. I, 1873, Ed. p. 277.

45 op., cit., Manucci, III, p. 65.

46 J.A.S.B., 1935, p. 256.

of 12 being burnt against her will at Lahore.⁴⁷ In the case of Jaimall, one of Akbar's officers, his son wanted to forcibly immolate his mother; she was eventually saved only by the intervention of Akbar. Sometimes the unfortunate widows, who were forced to become babies, used to recoil and run away from the funeral pyre. They were then regarded as untouchables and were not accepted back by the members of their family and caste. Sometimes they were rescued by European traders, who used to marry them. From the account of Manucci, it appears that they were not allowed to keep long hair or to put on ornaments.⁴⁸ According to Bernier, widowhood was considered a punishment for the sins of one's previous life.⁴⁹ Widow Remarriage was, however, allowed by the Mohammedan law and was practiced by the rich and the poor alike. Thevenot, a French traveller who visited India in 1669, found this practice of suttee very prevalent, and writes thus of it. "The Indian widow do not marry again, but are obliged, if they will not burn themselves, to live in perpetual widowhood; but then they live wretchedly, for they incur the contempt of their family and caste as being afraid to death". After describing the ceremonies usually observed at the burning of widows, the same traveller goes on to say: "The women were happy that the Mohammedans are become the masters in the Indies, to deliver them from the tyranny of the Brahmins, who always desire their death, because these ladies being never burnt without all their ornaments of gold and silver about them, and none but they having power to touch their ashes, they fail not to pick up all that is precious among them. However the great Mogul and other Mohammedan princes having ordered their governors to employ all their care in suppressing that abuse as much as lies in their power, it requires at present great solicitation and considerable present for obtaining the permission of being burnt."⁵⁰

To be widow, and more especially a childless or rather sonless widow, is to be the object not of sympathy and pity but of universal hatred and aversion. In the words of one, a Hindu widow herself "widowhood is throughout India

47 op., cit., Bernier, pp. 363-64.

48 op., cit., *Storia*, III, p. 61.

49 op., cit., Bernier, p. 314

50 op., cit., Thevenot, p -4

regarded as the punishment for a horrible crime or crime committed by the women in same former existence upon earth. It is the child widow, or the chillers young widow, upon whom in an especial manner fall the abuse and hatred of the community, as the greatest criminal upon whom Heaven's adamant has been pronounced." Again, "A widow is called an inauspicious thing, if she appears on any occasion of rejoicing, she will bring ill –luck. If a man starting on a journey sees a widow on the road, he will postpone his departure rather than run the risk of neglecting so evil a woman". The relatives and neighbors of a young widow's husband are always ready to call her bad names and, to address her in abusive language at every opportunity. There is scarcely a day on which she is not cursed as the cause of their beloved friend's death. In short, the young widow's life is rendered intolerable way.⁵¹

A widow cannot re –marry executed the risk of becoming an outcaste; she may not leave the home of her husband's people, she may not eat with them, she must have her hair cut off and wear wretched clothes and she may only be employed in the lowest and most menial tasks; and when it is remembered that there were in India in 1881 no less than 669,100 widows under the age of nineteen, all of them doomed by the cruel and senseless customs of their country to life long reclusion and misery, the extent of the evil becomes appalling.⁵² Della-Valle writes that the Hindu husband could remarry⁵³ in certain circumstances as on death of his wife or if she proved to be barren.⁵⁴ Bur it was pity that a Hindu woman had no such privilege. Rightly speaking, "no divorce was allowed even if the husband was a moral wrecker who grievously ill-treated his wife."⁵⁵ According to Bernier, widowhood was considered a punishment for sins of one's previous life.⁵⁶ Widow re-marriage was, however, allowed by the Mohammedan law and was practiced by the rich and the poor alike.

51 Ibid., p -5

52 Ibid., p-6

53 op., cit., Della Valle, vol. I, pp. 82-83.

54 op., cit., Mandelsolo, p. 52.

55 A. S. Altaker, *The Position of women in Hindu Civilization*.

56 op., cit., Bernier

POLYGAMY: Rightly speaking, polygamy brought many evils in the society and it created domestic unhappiness and immorality, as it was considered injurious for man's health to keep more than one wife.⁵⁷ Though the Quran permits a Mohammedan to marry four wives at a time, but Monogamy seems to have been the rule among the lower class of society in both the communities during the Mughal period.⁵⁸ Akbar had issued definite address that a man ordinary of means should not possess more than one wife unless the first proved to be barren.⁵⁹ Polygamy was the privilege of the rich Mohammedan, each of whom kept three or four wives at a time. The co-wives rivalled each other and used all devices to excel one another and thereby win the love of their husband.⁶⁰

Hindus, with exception of a smaller number of princes and very healthy persons, restricted themselves to monogamy as enjoined by their social custom and the ideal of Hindu society was to have one wife. Della-valle writes, "Hindus take but one wife and never divorce her till death except for the cause of adultery."⁶¹

PURDAH: The Purdah system in all probability was unknown in ancient India⁶² Purdah was strictly observed among high class families of both the communities during the Mughal period.⁶³ Wives of the nobles lived in spacious houses surrounded by high walls with tanks, gardens and other luxuries inside.⁶⁴ Della Valle writes: "for there (Muslim ladies) less they be dishonest or poor never come abroad."⁶⁵ De Laet writes that *purdah* was observed mainly by the Muslim ladies and it was not too rigid to the Hindu ladies.⁶⁶ But it was also adopted by the Hindu women as a protective measure to save their honour at the hands of the foreign invaders. Commenting on it, Cooper Elizabeth also writes that Hindus

57 op., cit., *Ain-I-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 277.

58 Abdul Quadir Badauni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, VoU to III translated by S.A.Ranking, W.H.Lowe and T.Wolsley Haig, Delhi, 1973. (Reprint). II, p. 356.

59 op., cit., Badauni II, p.357.

60 op., cit., *Pelsaert's India*, p. 66.

61 op., cit., Della Valle, vol. Pp. 82-83.

62 op., cit., A.S. Altekar, P-206.

63 op., cit., Mandelslo P-51; Della valle- p-461, Bernier P-413

64 op., cit., *Pelsert's India* P-64.

65 op., cit., Della Valle, p -411.

66 De Laet, *The Empire of the Great Mughal*, J. S. Hoyland Trans., p. 81.

adopted *Purdah* as prospective measure to save the honour of their women folk and to maintain the purity of their social order.⁶⁷

Bernier rightly observes: "It is indeed a proverbial observation in these armies that three things are to be carefully avoided, the first getting among the choice and led horses where kicking abounds, the second on the hunting ground, the third a too near approach to the ladies of the seraglio".⁶⁸ Mohammedans, according to Ovington and Fryer were very jealous of their wives. Even the meanest among them would not allow his wife to stir out uncovered. Those among them who could afford it, went out in palanquins said Della Valle, the Mohammedans would not allow their wives to talk even to their relatives, except in their presence.⁶⁹ Della, Valle writes: "Hindus take one wife and so fearful and jealous of the Mohammedans are of their several wives and women, for they suffer their wives to go abroad whither they please".⁷⁰ "Both the sexes had sufficient liberty to go out and enjoy the open air."⁷¹ It was the usual custom for husbands or some other male relations to accompany women when going out of doors.

DEPENDENCY: The position of a woman with regard to her husband was that of a dependent, in honorable subordination, at least as long as mutual relations remained cordial. Jahangir writes in the *Tuzak*. "It is a maximum of Hindus, that no good deed can be performed by men in the social state without the partnership or presence of the wife whom they have styled the half of man. Both would give way to accommodate each other to prevent their domestic happiness from being married. Her counsels carried weight, especially, when she had become a mother.

But still the last word was that of her husband. Even, "the daughter of a hundred kings" who had contemptuously refused to fetch a glass of water for her lord, and thus become, "cup-bearer to the chieftain of Sadri" had to be reminded

67 *Harem and Purdah*, p. 65.

68 op., cit., Bernier P-374.

69 op., cit., Della Valle, P-430.

70 op., cit., Della Valle, P-434.

71 op., cit., De-Laet, P-81.

by her father, the Rana of Mewar, of her position as a wife with respect to her husband, the chief of Sadri. The heir-apparent of Mewar stood at the edge of the carpet spread in the darbar hall "performing the menial office of holding the slippers of the chief". Who had been invited to the court by his sovereign? Tod writes; "shocked at such a mark of respect, he stammered forth some words of homage, "as my son-in law no distinction too great can be conferred. Take home your wife; she will never again refuse you a cup of water. Some of the husbands, however, it is to be regretted, treated their wives very harshly.

SATI: The history of sati goes back to very ancient times. According to V.A. Smith, this rite was brought into India by early immigrants. It continued throughout the Hindu and Rajput period. The heroic spirit shown by Hindu women who practised sati was admired by then Muslims as something noble. *Amir Khusrau* describing the burning of the woman on the funeral pyre of her husband observes, "Though this is not allowed in Islam, yet what a great achievement it is If this practice is made lawful amongst us, pious devotees might surrender their lives."⁷²

Malik Muhammad Jaisi had great praise for such types of women. He says "Sati who burns for truth to her lord, if there is truth in her heart then the fire is cooled".⁷³ *Ibn Battuta*, a Moorish traveller who visited India in the 14th century stayed at the court of Mohd. Thuglaq and enjoyed various positions, including that of a Qazi, has given a graphic picture of a lady whose husband fell in the battle. The entire scene was enacted before his own eyes. The sati, in this case, on hearing the news of her husband's death just took a bath and put on her best clothes and jewels. A procession was soon formed for her to conduct her to the place of cremation. The Brahmins did not miss the opportunity and joined the procession, not failing to explain to the young widow the transitory nature of life and the reality of life beyond. Once, she was burnt both priest assure her, a sati was sure to find awaiting her in the company of her husband for all eternity

72 Noh Sipihr, p. 195. or *A Rashid-Society and Culture in Medieval India*.

73 Padmavat, p. 112.

riches, apparel, honour and happiness beyond measure.⁷⁴ A study of the women of one period would be incomplete without a reference to the custom of sati. It prevailed throughout the Mughal period.

The Emperor Humayun was the first Mughal sovereign to think of extending on absolute prohibition to all cases.⁷⁵ Commenting on sati, R. B. Lall writes that some of the Mughal Emperors like *Akbar and Jahangir* showed a keen interest to suppress this cruel practice, but there was no active interference on practice on the part of the state to put an end to it.⁷⁶

Hawkins tells us that women burnt themselves voluntarily. The king used to persuade these women not to burn themselves, but they would not listen so the king gave permission. *Thevenot* writes "the glory of widowhood consist in being burnt with their husband is so horrid, that I desire to be excused that I write no more of it". *Bernier* says that this abnormal practice as the result of deeply-rooted prejudices. He adds that widows were sometimes forced to burn themselves.⁷⁷ *Manucci* also writes about the burning of widows. In Assam at the death of the master of the house, they burnt with him all his wives, Concubines and servants setting them all on fire after binding their feet".⁷⁸

Contemporary record indicates that Akbar had interfered personally in certain famous cases and stopped widows burning themselves. *Manucci* also says that Mughal emperors had imposed prohibition on Sati in order to remove it from the society.⁷⁹ According to *Badauni*, Akbar issued an order that a woman should not be forced to Sati.⁸⁰ *Jahangir* also prohibited it. *Aurangzeb* also disallowed a woman to be burnt.⁸¹ *Manucci* says that after returning from Kashmir, *Aurangzeb* issued an order that the officials should not allow a woman to be burnt. Thus it appears that the Great Muhals had ordered the governors to

74 Pramod Sangar, *The Socio-Economic History of Mughal India*. p. 132.

75 M. P. Srivasta, *Society and Culture in Medieval India*, p. 121.

76 *India as seen by the Foreigners in the 16th and 17th centuries*, p. 142.

77 op., cit., *Bernier*, p. 311.

78 op., cit., *Manucci II*, p. 100.

79 *Ibid.*, p. 97.

80 op., cit., *Badouni, II*, p. 388.

81 op., cit., *Thevenot*, p. 12.

suppress this abuse although this social evil continued till 1829 AD when Lord William Bentinck suppressed it by legislation.

Sati was prevalent practice in spite of the efforts of the Mughals to check it. Linked as they used to be from their infancy, separation was intolerable.⁸² In sati they saw hidden the symbolic meaning, the deep passionate joy of the sacrifice and the expression of love stronger than death. Even the betrothed girls had to commit sati on the funeral pyre of their husband. Those widows who would not burn themselves with their husband, society treated them very unfairly. Society looked down upon them.⁸³ Thevenot expresses that widowhood was considered a punishment for the sins of one's previous life.⁸⁴ Ovington recorded an immemorial example that some times the husband would burn themselves with their wives out of sheer love.⁸⁵

PUBLIC WOMEN: The prostitutes or the dancing and public women were engaged for the sake of amusement. From time to time, e.g. feasts, Festivals, marriages etc. they were commonly known as *Nartaki*, '*Veshya*,' '*Patur or Danika*'. Referring to prostitution, *Alberuni* observes thus, people think with regard to harlotry that it is allowed with them. *Niccolo Conti* writes thus, "Public women are everywhere to be had, residing in particular houses of their own in all parts of the cities, who attract the men by sweet perfumes and Ointments, by their blandishments, Beauty, and youth, for the Indians are much addicted to licentiousness; but unnatural crimes are unknown among them."⁸⁶ Chandbardai, in his "Prithviraj Raso," refers to a prostitute named chitrarekha patronized by sultan Shahabuddin Ghori, whose brilliance and beauty was reminiscent of those of rate (The wife of Cupid) she was well –versed and proficient in music and songs.

HAREM AND PROSTITUTES: The imperial Harem was an important institution in Mughal India. It was a place where the Emperor, the ladies of the royal family

82 op., cit., Ovington P-323.

83 op., cit., Mandelslo, P-86, Bernier P-314.

84 op., cit., Della Valle, P-435. Bernier – P-314.

85 op., cit., Ovington, pp -331 -343.

86 *Travels of Nicolo Conti*, London 1857, p -23.

and nobles of high ranks resided. Abul Fazl says: "His majesty has made a large enclosure with fine buildings inside, where he reposes. Though there are more than five thousand women, he has given to a separate apartment. He has also divided them into sections and keeps them attentive to their duties. The Mughal Emperors made suitable arrangements for the entertainment of the inmates many beautiful and renowned dancers and singers were appointed. They were not permitted to sing anywhere else except at some great festivals. Even Aurangzeb who was so much opposed to music allowed its continuance in the Mahal. Another source of amusement was the fancy fair like Mina-Bazar.

The nobles both Hindu and Muslim had their own harems designed on the pattern of royal harem. These harems were great centers of mirth and gaiety. Large number of women singers and dancers were appointed for their entertainment. Manucci says that among the singers and dancers there was a special caste called Cancheny who attended the court twice a week. This class was more esteemed than others by reason of their great beauty. These public women might have been largely responsible for the growing moral laxity in society. Akbar and Aurangzeb took drastic steps against them. A particular area was set apart for their habitation. An officer was appointed for this purpose and if anybody wanted to visit them home, he had to give him his name and address. After learning the names of Amirs and nobles who visited the prostitutes Akbar severely reprimanded and punished them. But Akbar could not eradicate this evil. After the death of Akbar, this evil spread to a greater extent. But Aurangzeb could not tolerate it and enforced many laws to prohibit it. His order to "kill the music and bury it" also might have affected this profession considerably. The status of women in Pre-Mughal India was better than that of the Mughal period was not wrong, the darkness, the suppression and the ignorance gave rise to the later women's movements in British India.

Role of Important Hindu Ladies and their Literacy and Cultural Activities

This work is based mainly upon the accounts of the foreign travellers. Besides, some information has been taken from Persian chronicles as well as

contemporary vernacular literature like Hindi. A good number of modern works, articles in various journals, gazetteers have also been utilized. Here, the researcher mainly discusses about some very notable educated Hindu ladies of the 16th and 17th centuries. These ladies were Chandravati, Madhvi Dasi, Mira Bai and Rupmati, Chandravati was the daughter of celebrated poet of Mansacult, Dwija Vamsidasa. Her life was tragic one. She started writing the Ramayana in Bengali, which remained incomplete due to her sudden death. Madhvi Dasi belonged to Orissa and when Chaitanaya Mahaprabhu came to Puri, she became his disciple. Mira Bai was the eminent poetess of Krishana cult. She belonged to royal Rajput family but after the death of her husband, she devoted herself fully to Lord Krishna. Her Bhajanas were very familiar to the Indians. Rupmati was the beloved wife of Baz Bahadur, the ruler of Malwa. She was expert in dance, music and poetry. She bravely died for the sake of her chastity.

EDUCATION: These unfortunate creatures had to put up with their parents who treated them no better than ordinary maids, doing all the menial jobs in the house, hated and despised even by their family. In the absence of formal schools in Ancient India, and lack of interest amongst rulers in educating the masses, education was imparted by the *Gurus* in their *Ashramas* by word of mouth. This was mostly in elegant poetry. Students, some of them women, memorized the teachings and sang them while seeking alms from door to door. This was the earliest version of extension education of women. In the earliest times at which government existed its sphere of interest seldom included the education of one and all of its citizens.⁸⁷

These traditional means of women's education faded away and became almost extinct when women were excluded from social and public life in the medieval period. The inevitable consequence was the rusting of their mental faculties and contraction of their mental horizons. Women became mere puppets in the hands of society which adversely affected the succeeding generations. Through cumulative degeneration, the society lapsed into a deep slumber of

87 Manindra Kapoor, *Women and Family Life Education in India*. Jaipur, 1986, p -7

ignorance and inertia.⁸⁸ Women have an important and unparalleled role to play in the nation's development. The potential is there undoubtedly, but sadly, it has been not exploited. Manifestation of the potential within is possible only through education.

Muslim women in India had no reason to fear comparison with contemporary Muslim women in other parts of the world. A study of contemporary literature tells us much about the inner life and thoughts of the people and also of the state of learning, acquired by women who flourished in religious circles and courts of kings. Muslims never built any separate educational centers for their girls⁸⁹ and she memorizes Quran may be exceptional.

Women must have been educated at home by their elderly and learned relations. *Ratnawali*, the wife of Puran Mal, possessed great poetic gifts. *Mira Bai*, one of the best representatives of Hindu culture, wrote *Narayana Mora*, *Geeta Govind's*, *Tika* or contemporary *Raj Govind*, *Mira Ke Pad* and *Garba Geet*. *Gulbadan Begum* wrote the *Humayun Nama*.⁹⁰ Malik Mohamamd Jaisi had great praise for such type of women. He says: "Sati who burns for truth of her lord, if there is truth in her heart then the fire is cooled."⁹¹

Women have been regarded as the nuclei of a nation. Just as the body is made up of millions of cells controlled by their nuclei; a nation is made up of millions of families depending upon the women, house –wives and mothers for their progress and well –being. The health and growth of the body depends on the vitality of its cells; so also the health and growth of the nation depends on the vitality of its women.⁹² Throughout history, education has been a significant mechanism for shaping the populace in accordance with the views of state from Ancient period to modern period. The education of males and females trained them for different adult roles. Male education was often pointed towards men's

88 Ibid

89 Ibn Battuta, *Rehla* p. 179.

90 op., cit., *Gulbadan Begum*, pp. 113, 120.

91 Malik Mohammad Jaisi, *Padmavat*, p. 112.

92 Ibid, p -1, Introduction.

public roles as administration, military and political leaders; girls were raised to be wives and mothers of outstanding men. Social and economic changes encouraged several strange-spirited women to push for higher education for women.⁹³ Education was the most significant route to social mobility and alternative gender.

PARTICIPATION IN ADMINISTRATION AND POLITICS:- From *Baburnamah*, it appears that during the reign of *Babur* ladies took active part in politics and administration. *Ehsan Daulat Begum* gave valuable help in the administration of *Babur*. She was a wise and farsighted lady.⁹⁴ *Babur's* mother, *Qutlug Nigar Khanum* always accompanied him in his war and his Shia wife *Mahim Begum* took active part in the administration. *Bibi Mubarika*, another wife of *Babur*, strengthened his hold in Afghanistan.⁹⁵ During the reign of *Humayun*, *Khanzada Begum* held on an important position in the Harem and she was given the title of *Badshah Begum*. In the complicated family matters she was consulted by *Humayun*, who had a great faith in her. *Gulbadan Begum* took keen interest in the political affairs and had much influence of *Humayun* and his brothers. *Humayun* always addressed her as 'Dearest lady'. *Haram Begum*, wife of *Humayun's* cousin *Sulaiman Mirza*,⁹⁶ also took keen interest in administration. She helped *Humayun* in his *Balkh* expedition by collecting a strong army.⁹⁷ She also encouraged by collecting a strong army.⁹⁸ She also encouraged her husband *Mirza Sulaiman* to make an attempt to capture the fort of *Kabul* in 1556 A.D. She showed dexterity and skill in the administration of the Kingdom and in the management of the army. It appears from contemporary sources that there were several instances when ladies acted as mediators and they were successful in settling the disputes. *Jahangir*, who had been for years in rebellion against his father, was forgiven on the intervention of *Salima Begum*.

93 Ibid, p -136.

94 *Babarnamah*, Bev, Trans. vol. I, p. 43.

95 Ibid., p. 375.

96 G. H. N. (Bev. Trans), p. 103.

97 *Akbarnamah*, vol. I, p. 212.

98 G. H. N. (Bev. Trans), p. 195.

Rani Karmavati, wife of *Rana Sanga* also played a vital role in the politics during the reign of *Humayun*. When *Bahadur Shah* of Gujrat threatened an invasion of Mewar, the political situation became worse.

In medieval times, painting as a profession, appears to have been a male domain, since only a few women painters are known to have worked at the Mughal atelier. The descriptions given on the Mughal miniatures reveal their names, Viz. *Nzdira Bano*, Daughter of *Mir taqi* and pupil of *Aga Riza* (the well known painter in the services of prince *Salim* during *Akbar's* reign), *Ruqai Bano* and *Sahifa Bano*. However, the style of their work established their affiliation with Jahangir's studies.

Rani Karmavati who had tact, ability and political foresight, sent a *Braclet (Rakhi)* to Humayun and appealed for help but she could not get any substantial help from him.⁹⁹ In the second attack of Chittor in 1535 AD by *Bahadurshah*, she performed *Jauhar* as she could not protect the fort. *Bahadurshah* captured the fort on March 8, 1535 AD.¹⁰⁰ The vital role of *Rani Karmavati* in the politics of Mewar proves her ability and interest in politics.

In the reign of *Akbar*, *Mahchuchak Begum* (a step mother of Akbar) took active part in the political affairs of *Kabul*, *Mahamanaga*, the chief nurse of Akbar,¹⁰¹ controlled the affairs of the state for full four years 1560-64 by sheer audacity and cleverness.¹⁰² According to Dr. *R.P. Tripathi*, she wished to retain powers either in her own hands or in collaboration with her relatives, and Akbar did not like it. We find that in 1561 AD, Akbar appointed *Shamshuddin Atka Khan* as the *Prime Minister* and when he took the management of the political, financial and military affairs, she became displeased.¹⁰³ It is said that her aim was the ruin of *Bairam Khan* and promotion of her son's interest. But the facts reflected in the Persian sources do not support this contention. *Bairam Khan* was

99 Ishwari Prasad, *Life and Times of Humayun*, p. 65, Awasthi Mughal Emperor Humayun, pp. 139-40.

100 G. N. Sharma, *Mehar and the Mughal Emperors*, pp. 55-57.

101 V. A. Smith, *Akbar*, p. 36.

102 op., cit., *Akbarnamah*, II, p. 100.

103 Von Noer, *The Emperor Akbar*, Vol. I, p. 95.

not punished; nor did Adam Khan gain any favour. It seems that Akbar was not under her influence and was using her as his instrument.

Apart from the Harem, the Hindu women *Rani Durgavati* the Chandel Princess of Gondwana, famous for her beauty and accomplishments,¹⁰⁴ governed her country with great courage.¹⁰⁵ V. A. Smith writes that her country was better administered and more prosperous than that of Akbar the Great.¹⁰⁶ She was not ready to submit her authority to Emperor Akbar. She fought bravely when the eminent general of Akbar was ordered to invade *Garha*.¹⁰⁷ She was wounded in the battle and she then fought to die with honour than to live in disgrace. So she stabbed herself and thus she died in honour. *Chandbibi's* name also shines brilliantly in the annals of Ahmednagar. She played an active role in the administration of Ahmednagar.

Another lady of this period was Bakhtunnisa Begum, half sister of Akbar, who was appointed to the (governor) government of *Kabul*. She helped Akbar in solving the problem of Abdhulla Khan Vibek. *Miriam Makani*, Akbar's mother and *Salima Sultan Begum*, his wife, also played important roles in political matters. *Makhduma-u-Jahan* ruled the Deccan very ably as a regent on behalf of *Nizam Shah* of the *Bahmani* family.¹⁰⁸ *Sahibji*, the daughter of *Ali Mardan*, was a clever and able lady. She was the actual governor of *Kabul* during her husband's vice-royalty. She displayed her great administrative qualities after the death of the husband, by ruling over the turbulent Afghans without allowing any serious opposition.¹⁰⁹

During the first year of the reign of Jahangir, his step mother *Salima Sultan Begum*, with some other ladies of the harem, played a very significant role in contemporary politics in 1606 AD. *Khusru*, the eldest son of Jahangir who had revolted, was given pardon by the pressure of *Salima Sultan Begum*.¹¹⁰

104 op., cit., Badaoni, II, p. 66. Elliot and Donson, Vol. V, pp. 169, 288.

105 op., cit., *Akbarnamah*, II, pp. 209-214.

106 op., cit., *Akbar the Great Mughal*, pp. 69-70.

107 Ibid, p. 50.

108 A. M.A. Shushtery, *Outlines of Islamic Culture*, Vol. II, p. 771.

109 Sarkar, *Studies in Mughal India*, pp. 114-117.

110 *Maasir-I-Jahangiri*, Kamgar Khan, vol. I, p. 328.

Nurjhan personally looked after the affairs of the state and was the real power behind the throne of Jahangir. Jahangir reposed great confidence in her. She was a very ambitious lady and wanted to have power in her own hands.¹¹¹ Beni Prasad writes that Nurjahan formed a *Junta (clique)* of her close relatives including her father *Itimad-ut-Daula*, her mother *Asmat Begum* and her brother *Asaf Khan* and it is worthwhile to mention that through the help of this *junta* she exercised her influence by giving important places to her relatives. When in power, she ruled everything, when out of power she abstained, religiously, from all active life. Such was her nature.¹¹²

The foreign travellers, namely Pelsaert, Terry, Peter Mundy and Thomas Roe have mentioned about the existence of *Nurjahan's Junta* in the court. But no reference of this Junta is forthcoming in the contemporary Persian works.¹¹³ Commenting on it, R. P. Tripathi says, "Whatever influence Nurjahan exercised over Jahangir was of a purely personal nature, based possibly on her emotions and her devotion to him."¹¹⁴

In the reign of Shahjahan, Mumtaz Mahal occupied the premier position in the Harem and the Emperor, usually, consulted her on private and state affairs.¹¹⁵ When she died in 1631 AD Jahanara Begum, the eldest daughter of Shahjahan, took keen interest in politics. When Aurangzeb was bent upon annexing the Kingdom of *Qutub Shah*, the latter wrote letters to *Jahanara Begum* and Dara Shukoh. Jahanara and Dara Shukoh intervened in this issue and Qutubshah was pardoned. After paying indemnity, Qutubshah secured peace.¹¹⁶ From *Waqiat-I-Alamgiri*, it appears that *Jahanara Begum* favoured Dara Shukoh in the war of succession. Before the battle of Samugarh started on 23rd May 1658 AD, she wrote a letter to Aurangzeb asking him to give up the evil designs and obey his father.¹¹⁷ *Raushanara Begum*, the second daughter of

111 *Maasir-I-Alamgiri*, Sarkar Trans. Voll. I, p. 328; Rekha Misra, *Women in Middle India*, p. 33.

112 P.N. Chopra, *Some Aspects of Society and Culture During the Mughal Age*, p. 125.

113 *Tawarikh-I-Jahangir Shahi and Fathehnama-I-Nurjahan* are Persian works.

114 *Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire*, p. 422.

115 *Islamic Culture*, 1937, vol. XI, p. 373.

116 K. R. Qanungo; *Dara Shukoh*, vol. , pp. 137-38.

117 Agil Khan Razi, *Waqat-i-Alamgiri*, pp. 16-17.

Shahjahan, helped Aurangzeb in his plan of snatching the crown from the hands of his father.¹¹⁸ And when Aurangzeb took up arms in order to occupy the throne of Delhi, she placed at his disposal all gold and silver available to her.¹¹⁹ She was given a reward of five lakhs of rupees and the title of *Shah Begum* in 1669 AD.

The two wives of Aurangzeb, *Dilras Banu Begum* and *Udaipuri Mahal* were active and ambitious ladies in the reign. But it seems that Aurangzeb did not allow his wife to take active part in politics. However, it appears that *Udaipur Mahal* continued to influence Aurangzeb till his death and it was the result of her influence that he pardoned many faults of his son *Kambaksh*.¹²⁰ Aurangzeb's sister also took active interest in the affairs of the state. *Raushanara Begum* had helped him in the war of succession and when Aurangzeb fell ill in May 1662 AD, she began to look after the affairs of the state. The other sister of Aurangzeb, *Jahanara Begum* also played considerable part when the Maratha conqueror Shivaji paid a visit to Agra¹²¹ in the year 1666 AD. It appears that the daughters of Aurangzeb, *Zebunnisa Begum* and *Padshan Begum* took active interest in the political matters. It is a fact that when Mohammad Akhtar the younger brother of *Zebunnisa* raised the standard of revolt, she actively helped him.

Another lady who played an active role in the reign of Aurangzeb was *Sahibji*, wife of *Amir Khan* who was appointed Governor of Kabul in 1678 AD.¹²² She had a good grasp of the current politics.¹²³ We find that the Maratha as well as Rajput ladies played a decisive role in the administrative affairs and proved their administrative enthusiasm. The Maratha King Raja Ram's widow, Tara Bai, became the supreme guiding force in Maharashtra,¹²⁴ "She displayed such marvelous capacity and administrative ability in encountering the Mughal onslaught that threatened to engulf the Maratha state that all the efforts of the

118 Rekha Mishra, *Women in Medieval India*, p. 35.

119 op., cit., Tavernier's Travel; vol. I, pp. 376-77.

120 *Alamgirnamah*, p. 368.

121 op., cit., Sarkar, vol. I, p. 64.

122 op., cit., Rekha Mishra, op. cit., p. 48.

123 op., cit., Sarkar, Vol. III, p. 243.

124 Ibid., p. 244.

Emperor Aurangzeb failed miserably.¹²⁵ The Rajput women of noble families were trained as soldiers and they often displayed great bravery, courage and heroism. The valiant *Durgavati* fought and won many battles against Baz-Bahadur and the Minas.¹²⁶ *Chandbibbi*, a famous Muslim heroine personality, defended the fort of Ahmednagar against the mighty forces of Akbar.¹²⁷ *Nurjahan* gave ample proof of her martial capabilities in leading an attack against Mohabat Khan. These examples are enough to show that ladies in the medieval India could defend themselves and their country.

WOMEN'S INTEREST IN PILGRIMAGES: We find that some of the ladies devoted themselves to religious pursuits. They spent their time in the service of God, in prayers (*Namaz*) and reading the holy (Quran). *Jahanara Begum* spent much of her time in religious pursuits and devotion to God.¹²⁸ A reference in Humayunama of *Gulbadan Begum* shows that *Sultanam* the wife of *Nizamuddin Ali Khalifa Barlas*, visited *Mecca* along with *Gulbarag Begum*.¹²⁹ The wife of Humayun was allowed to go on pilgrimage to the holy places and Akbar arranged it by providing all necessities. Akbar again made arrangements in the year 1575 AD, when *Gulbadan Begum*, alongwith many other ladies, went on a pilgrimage of the holy places.¹³⁰

GRANT OF TITLES AND PARGANAS: The prestige of the ladies who belonged to royalty was enhanced by giving dillies to them. The title of *Mariam Makani* was given to the mother of Akbar.¹³¹ Jahangir's mother was known as *Maryamus Zamani*.¹³² The mother of Shahjahan was given the title of *Bilqis Makani*. The popular title of '*Nurmahal*' (the light of the palace) and *Nurjahan* (the light of the world) was enjoyed by *Mehrunnisa*. *Mumtaz Mahal*, the wife of Shahjahan was

125 Khafi Khan, II, pp. 469, 516.

126 op., cit., *Akbarnamah*, II, p. 325.

127 *Ferishta III*, p. 312.

128 *Iqbalnama*, pp. 262-63.

129 J.P.H.S. 1912, vol.II, p. 163.

130 G. H. N. Beveridge Trans. Vol. II, p. 169.

131 op., cit., *Akbarnamah*, Beveridge Trans. Vol. III, pp. 366-67.

132 op., cit., *Akbarnamah*, vol. III, p. 815.

given the title of *Malika-I-Jahan*. Jahanara enjoyed the title of *Padshah Begum*. According to Manucci, she was usually known as *Begum Saheb*.¹³³

Babur was first Mughal sovereign who started granting *Parganas* to the ladies of the Mughal Harem. Jahangir also granted land to the ladies. Nurjahan enjoyed a number of Jagirs.¹³⁴ Shahjahan also sanctioned grants and allowances to the ladies of the royalty. Thus it appears that the Mughal emperors treated their ladies with utmost regard.

VOLUNTARY ROLES OF WOMEN: Upper class women enact clear cut gender roles that often differ, dramatically, from those of their middle and working class sisters. Some sociologists argue that upper class women's gender roles involve setting styles and acting as arbiters of culture. Through their activities with charity balls and other cultural¹³⁵ social events, upper class women influence the taste and behavior of their middle class sisters, particularly, for whom they commonly serve as role models.¹³⁶

According to European travellers: Nurmahall as a pattern of all the virtues, and worthy to wield the supreme influence which she obtained over the emperor. "By degrees," says Muhammad Hadi, the continuer of Jahangir's memories, "she became, except in name, undisputed Bovereign of the empire, and the king himself became a tool in her hands. He used to say that Nur –Jahan Begum has been selected, and is wise enough, to conduct the matters of state. Nur –Jahan won golden opinions from all people. She was liberal and just to all who begged her support. She was an asylum for all sufferers, and helpless girls were married at the expense of her private purse. She must have portioned about five hundred girls in her life time, and thousands were grateful for her generosity."¹³⁷

133 op., cit., *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Rogges of Beveridge Trans., vol. I, p. 76

134 op., cit., Manucci, II, p. 127.

135 Ibid, p -129.

136 Ibid, p -130.

137 Stanley Lane Poole, *The Mughal Emperor of Hindustan*. Sarvadeshir Prakashan, Delhi – N.D. p -XIX

The most basic division of labour appears to be founded on Gender. Some jobs are considered suited to men hunting, mining, Combating, protecting etc. and some to women childbearing and rearing, cooking, cleaning, and home making, in all societies. Although, Anthropologists like Murdock and Tiger and Sociologists like Parsons, believed this sexual division of labour and inequality of sexes to be neutral, due to biological and genetic differences between men and women¹³⁸

Most women who are only housewives do a lot of economically productive work in the sense that if they didn't do it, money would have to be paid to get it done; but their work is not recognized as no money is generated directly. Unless their feminine jobs, which require lots of manual effort as well as various types of skill are recognized as useful, productive work, women's status will not improve. These jobs include cooking, cleaning, childcare, upbringing and primary education of children, moral and cultural training, nursing, interior decoration, home economics and above all providing a healthy, happy, emotionally secure atmosphere to the family members.

Thus, the traditional role of women is as important as of Men. In contemporary Indian society, the number of working women increased, becoming economically independent and more self confident. While a majority of them are successfully handling their dual roles with help from family members, even constitution of India which promised liberty equality, fraternity and justice to all the citizens of India, regardless of religion, caste class or gender. Women have come a long way, making rapid strides in various fields, even domains previously identified as 'male bastion'.

At the same time, it is being increasingly realized that sound human development necessitates a condition of gender equality; a society where women are empowered have the freedom to make their own choices. This

138 Zainab Rahman, *Women And Society*, Delhi -2005, P -38.

necessitates a look into the status of women, which is the focus of the present work. If educated and bold women too began to raise a demand for equal rights, although in the initial years such demands focused primarily on women's equal rights to acquire an education. If women are denied the right to be borne, they are subjected to the crudest forms of violence and sexual slavery; their voices remain excluded from decision making, in policies and plans which impact them. Moreover, women in medieval India may work from dawn to dusk, but their economic contribution is scarcely acknowledged at the national level and their access to health, education and other facilities lags behind that of men.

CHAPTER – 3

AGRICULTURAL AND NON-AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Right from the beginning, agriculture played an important role in Indian economy. It was the chief profession of ancient Indian society. Agriculture was the mainstay of Indian economic life. Agriculture means, a science of practice, a farming, which includes the cultivation of soil for the growing of crops and the rearing of animals to provide food, wool, cotton and other products.¹ India was, as she continued to be, an agricultural country, and a vast majority of her population depended on agriculture weather directly or indirectly. The land was extremely fertile and its productivity was extraordinary. It was rich in mineral wealth and material resources. It was equally vast and almost limitless in extant. Indian geographical conditions are so suitable that every sort of crop can be grown. During ancient times, people used a word 'Karsi' for cultivating the soil. "The word 'Karsi' is derived from the root 'Krs' meaning to till by plough. Nevertheless, its meaning is not confined to tilling or ploughing alone. It includes, indeed, all the senses like tilling or ploughing, sowing, reaping, threshing etc."²

"In medieval period, the patterns of agriculture practices are more or less the same as that of the early India; save for important changes which were evident in the introduction of new crops, trees as well as certain horticultural plants by the foreign traders and introduction of new land tenure system by rulers during the period. The geographical distribution of the main food crops was also more or less the same as we find today."³ Land needed proper ploughing before sowing took place. "For the purpose, he was required to plough and after a month to dig and break up the clouded soil into smoothness and turnover the moist Earth, by means of a pair of shovels as spades, joined

1 Oxford Learners Dictionary, London -1962, p -25.

2 Amolya kumar Bhattacharjee, "Agriculture in Vedic India," Bombay, Vol. -38, No. -I, 1978, p -47.

3 D.M. Bose, ed., *Concise History of Sciences in India*, Delhi, 1971, p. -336.

together in a horizontal plank and drawn by couple of men.”⁴ Number of oxen which were to be used in ploughing was also vague. In ancient India, we find the references of such ploughs which were drawn by 4, 8 and 12, pair of oxen. But in medieval India, there is no reference about the number of Bull to be used for ploughing.⁵ In medieval India both iron pointed ploughs as well as hard wooden ploughs were used. The production of crop was affected by the manner of cultivation. Farmers ploughed the field a number of times before final sowing. In medieval India farmers used different types of sowing methods, broadcasting seeding by drills, transplantation, and dibbling were main methods employed by them.

“Medieval Indian farmers were conversant with the importance of manuring and held cow dung as the best form of all manure. It was applied in two different ways; either solution were prepared with mixtures of different fertilizing agents and applied to the seeds prior to sowing and this was thought to ensure better germination or else, manure was applied to the field at the time of sowing the seed or when seedlings have been farmed.” Apart from cow dung manure dropping of *cattle*, *Buffaloes*, *Sheep*, *Goats* and some *birds*, made of good fertilizer, but those of horse and camels were considered to posses much greater potency. Dried grass and straws too were added to the heap. Further more, in order to prevent breeding of wholly worn in its process of decomposition, ash of common wood fuel, as an alkaline insecticides was mixed with the manure heap.” Similarly all over the medieval India a method of manuring with the help of *Sheep* and *Goats* was wide spread.

Irrigation also played an important role in maintaining fertility of land. Medieval Indian farmers irrigated their fields by both artificial and natural methods. Timely rains were very helpful for good yield and also a source of natural irrigation. “Rainfall was one of the most important factors which determined the areas where agriculture could be conveniently practiced.” India had a good amount of rain fall and medieval agriculture was largely dependent

4 H.K. Naqvi, *Agricultural, Industrial and Urban dynamism Under the Sultans of Delhi*, Delhi, 1986, p -14.

5 Ibid.

on rainfall. “To supplement rains artificial irrigation methods too were used. Fields were irrigated by *river channels, canals, water tanks* and *wells* etc. In medieval India masonry wells as well as brick less (cutcha) wells were also used for irrigation.” Along with these devices medieval Indian farmer used *wheels* to raise water from wells. By these water wheels they could bring out more and more water for irrigation Khwaja Hasan was appointed a Wazir by Akbar, “to look-after the irrigation Department, a of lake 7 Kos in circumference was⁶ constructed for irrigation purposes, at Fatehpur-Sikri under his supervision, which was extending from Sikri to Bharatpur ruins and its embankment could be seen today.”

SOIL: Soil always plays an important role in agricultural production. “In no country of the world” says T.H. Holdich, “has geographical position shaped the history and destinies of the people more surely than in India. A land of promise where nature offers her gifts with lavish hands and where the soils are peculiarly favourable to the reproduction of mankind” According to Ain-I-Akbari, during the 16th century, on the basis of land revenue record indicate prosperous agricultural activity, both *Rabi and kharif* production are provided regarding the agricultural produce and non-agrarian activities.⁷

TECHNOLOGY: It is generally believed that there attained a remarkable amount of success in field of science and technology before the 12th century A.D. but, thereafter, there was a downward placing due to the traditional compulsions and political vicissitudes.⁸ However, the intrusion of Islam into Indian history opened the gates a little wider for the admission of techniques received from external sources. There were, accordingly, certain improvements in agricultural tools and methods, which can be ascribed to the medieval period⁹ By 1200 AD there was a high level of agricultural development so that the Muslim Sultans were unable to contribute substantially any further in regard to the crops sown or the manner

⁶ Ain II (Tr.) H. S. Jarret. Pp.. 69- 121

⁷ Adhya Bharti Saxena, *Dabohi –An urban settlement of central Gujarat C.-1000 –C.-1800 A.D. IHC Proceedings, 61st session, 2001, Kolkatta, p. 362.*

⁸ Ahsan Jan Aqisar, *The Indian Response to European Technology and Culture, AD 1498 – 1707* (Delhi: OUP, 1982), p. 2.

in which they were sown or harvested.¹⁰ The Sultans of Delhi, however, followed a policy of extension of cultivation and bringing about improvement in the cropping pattern.¹¹

The heart of the kingdom of Delhi Sultans lay in the landlocked Indus and upper Gangetic-Plain whereas even agriculture was the paramount productive activity.¹² The high fertility of Indian soil has been a marked feature of its agriculture through the ages. Amir Khusrau also speaks of the fertility and fruitfulness of Indian soil and the temperate nature of its climate.¹³ The Indus basin consists of alluvial silt deposited by river Sind and its tributaries. Ibn Battuta describes it as this in one of the largest river beds of the world. It overflows in summer and the people of the Punjab cultivate the soil after its overflow.¹⁴ Ain-i-Akbari's revenue record gives a list of sixteen crops of the Rabi (spring harvest) and twenty five crops of Kharif (autumn) harvest in every province of the country. Thus in each locality as many as forty –one crops were being cultivated within a year. Similar multi assessed crops appear in the Ain–I–Akbari's, rates for other provinces, e.g. seventeen Rabi, crops and twenty six Kharif in suba Delhi, and so on. These revenue rates are set out for the various provinces.¹⁵ He also points out that wheat was commonly grown in the provinces of *Agra, Allahabad, Oudh, Delhi, Lahore, Multan, Malwa, Ajmer Dabol and Qandhar Sarkar*.¹⁶ The pattern of food grains production in Mughal India indeed, appears to be largely the same as we find today. Given a settled technique, geographical conditions are naturally, the decisive factor in shaping the pattern

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- 9 Irfan Habib, *Essays in Indian History: Towards a Marxist Perception*, New Delhi, 1995, p.141.
 - 10 Hamida Khatoon Naqvi, *Agricultural, Industrial and Urban Dynamism Under the Sultans of Delhi* (New Delhi), Munshiram-1986), p. 12. By and large the harvesting methods or the other means employed in the agricultural produce did not show any advancement or improvement existed during the Sultanate period.
 - 11 W. H. Moreland, *The Agrarian System of Moslem India* (1929, New Delhi: Atlantic, 1994), 50 -51-59.
 - 12 op. cit., Naqvi, p. 11.
 - 13 Yuasuf Husain, *Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture*, Bombay, Ana, 959, p.122.
 - 14 Ibn Battuta, *Rehla*, Trans. Mohd. Hasan, Baroda Orient Institute. 1953
 - 15 Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari* Vol. I, translated by H.Blochmann, Delhi 1964 (Reprint). p -123. Or Tapan Raychaudhry & Irfan Habib -(ed.) *Cambridge Economic History Of India*, Vol.I Cambridge. 1982, p -217.
 - 16 Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol.II, translated by H.S.Jarret, Asiatic Society of Bengal,

of agricultural production of any region. The nature of the soil and the seasonal distribution of rainfall, broadly, contributed to the production of particular food grains. The climate of India, like that of any other country has largely been dependent upon physical features or climate. Agricultural production depends upon many factors like type of soil, irrigation facility, quality of seed, tilling techniques, cattle refuse etc.

India's economy, during the Mughal period as in the ages before, was predominantly agricultural. More than seventy five per cent of the population lived in the villages and were directly or indirectly connected with land. The country, full of men and full of products, was divided into villages which were surrounded by cultivable fields and had also land for pasture and forests for fuel and other purposes. There were two types of village viz. *asli* (one having its habitation intact) and *Dakhili* (the deserted village). Another classification was into the *riyati* villages and *Talluqa* villages. The *raiyyti* villages belonged to Khalsa land, but the village was under a *Zamnidar*, who paid land revenue to Government. The cultivators were called *Asami* or *Muzara*. The cultivators followed the traditional method of cultivation and irrigation. The fields were manured with animal dung, and intensive ploughing was done. Villagers were familiar with the principle of rotation of crops and in many fields they raised two crops *kharif* and *Rabi* in a year. Not only were the ordinary crops raised, but in some parts special crops, such as cotton, sugarcane and indigo were grown.¹⁷

In Akbar's time economy was agriculture-based. He took immediate measures to increase the capacity of the peasant to produce more. He allotted the work of agrarian reforms to the sagacious minister, '*Todar Mal*,' the entire land of the kingdom measured and classified by him. Above all the peasant was made the real owner of the land and all the arbitrary exactions of revenue from him were done away with. For the guidance of the revenue officers a manual of instructions was prepared. This manual "Encourage the royts to extend the cultivation and carry on agriculture with all their heart. Do not screw everything

Calcutta, 1891. p. 69-121 & 234-67.

17 Elliot & Dowsan, *History of India as Told by Her Own Historians*, Vols. IV to VIII,

out of the remember that roys as permanent". Any violations of the manual instructions entailed severe penalties. This sagacious policy yielded quick and rich rewards both for the cultivator and the emperor.¹⁸

Edward Terry travelled in India between 1615 -1618 as Chaplain to the Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe, expressed that the country produced wheat, rice, barley and various other grains, all were good and exceedingly cheap.¹⁹ In the production of food grains, Mughal India exhibited the same broad division into rice, wheat and millet zones that we find today, with the 40 and 50 inch annual isohyets setting the dividing line. In the *Assam Valley*, in *Bengal and Orissa*, on the Eastern coast and in the Tamil, country, the narrow strip along the Western coast and *Kashmir*, rice was cultivated to the virtual exclusion of wheat and millets, in *Bihar, Ahmadabad, Awadh and Khandesh*. It enjoyed only a partial domain. It was grown in Gujarat especially in the Southern coastal belt. Rice cultivation also introduced in dry area through irrigation from the river Indus and its tributaries made it a major crop of *Sind*, while high grade rice was produced in *Lahore*.²⁰

Although, during Mughal period, the Agricultural products are divided into five heads: But , however, Abul Fazl makes a mention of four only as the Poppy is absent from his account. (i) *Grain*; (ii) *Fibres*, (iii) *Indigo*, (iv) *Sugarcane* and (v) *Poppy* The *Shahjahanama* mentions that wheat and barley were grown on the boundary between *Kashmir* and *Tibet*. A special quality of wheat was found in *Kabul and Qandhar*. *Qandhar* wheat was extremely white and was sent as a present to distant countries as a thing of value. Abul -Fazl mentions in *Ain* that wheat and barley are called *Safed Bari*.

Wheat was a spring crop as it is now-a-days *Waqat-i-Babri* and *Khulasat-ul-Tawarikh* and other contemporary works contain references supporting the

Allahabad (Reprint) VIII, p. 86.

18 O. P. Sharma, *Indian Culture, Ancient Glory and Peasant Class*, Delhi, 1993, pp. 122-23.

19 James Talboys Wheller and Michael Macmillan, *European Travellers in India*, Calcutta, 12, 1956, p. 1.

20 Fray Sebastian Manrique, *Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique*, 2 Vols. English translation and Edited by Father H. Hasten, Oxford, 1927, Vol.II deals with india. II., p-221.

cultivation of wheat in various provinces. In his *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh*, Sujan, Rai rightly maintains that “rains are the causes of improvement of agriculture, increase of revenue, cheapness of grains and populated regions”. He continues: “Though some agriculture is carried on by irrigation from wells. In Kabul, Sujan Rai maintains wheat forming is done by canals”. Farishta also alluded that the *Rabi* crop (wheat cultivation) was being carried on well by irrigation. Aurangzeb, by a definite farman, advocated the improvement of cultivation in Gujarat.²¹

Wheat was an important Rabi crop and appears to have been cultivated in maximum parganas of the country. The wheat crop depends on rainfall and irrigation. Two varieties of wheat were raised on well irrigated land; Kharchiya and Mithavania. Presumably, the first quality was produced by irrigation with saline water, the other with sweet water. Wells and tanks were the main source of such irrigation. Different devices were used for lifting water from wells into field channel. Tanks and reservoirs played an important role as source of irrigation in central India, the Deccan, and Southern India.

In Northern plains, particularly the upper Gangetic and Indus Basins, numerous canals were cut from rivers to furnish irrigation.²² Travellers like John Fryer, Peter Mundy, Tavernier have mentioned the variety of Wheat having Sown / grown in various places like in the province of: *Lahore and Multan*,²³ *Surat* and *Broach*,²⁴ between *Metra* and *Pipar*,²⁵ *Malwa* and *Khandesh*,²⁶ *Agra*, *Allahabad*, *Delhi*, *Awadh* and *Ajmer*, *Kumaun*, *Gorakhpur*, etc.

Tavernier maintains that the Mughal territories were manured and the fields well-irrigated. While passing through the country he met a tribe called Manor,

21 Jean Baptiste Tavernier *Travels in India*, 2 Vols. English translation by V. Ball, London, 1889. *Chap. III*, p. 28. X Todar Mal was an Outstanding personality of Medieval India and was highly reputed for his agricultural reforms as he simply excelled in this venture and left a permanent name in the history of Medieval India

22 T. Rai Chaudhary and Irfan Habib, (ed.), *Cambridge, Economic History of India, Cambridge*. 1982, p-216.

23 Op., cit., Manrique – II, p -221.

24 John Fryer, *A New Account of East India & Persia, being Nine Years. Travels*, 3 Vols., Edited by William Crooke, London, 1909. I, p -297.

25 Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, 1608-67*, Edited by Richard Carnac Temple and L.M. Anstey, Cambridge, 1907-36. II, p-246

26 op., cit., *Ain –I*, p - 455.

which had four, similar groups each consisting of one lakh of men. The first of these was engaged in the transportation of corn, mostly wheat, the second rice and the third pulse and the fourth salt. He came across good yield of wheat on his journey from Surat to Agra via Sironj. From Surat to Baroda wheat was found in plenty as he saw the smiling field laden with wheat crops.²⁷ Sir Thomas Roe who visited India during the reign of Jahangir once met near Berampur 10,000 bullocks loaded with wheat. The Province of Thatta also abounded in wheat during the reign of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb. Malwa was rich in agricultural crops mostly corn.²⁸ Wheat has the greatest comparative value amongst the food grains as at present. An idea of the comparative values can be had from estimates Moreland prepared from the figures of Akbar's time which held well in the latter times up to Aurangzeb and long afterwards. Wheat was cultivated throughout its natural region.

RICE: Rice is a tropical commodity requiring for its successful cultivation plenty of water and a high temperature. Water-logged areas are most suited for its growth. In Bengal, Hugli, Sonargaon territory produced plenty of rice, mostly three kinds of crops a year, and supplied it to deficient areas, such as Cochin. It was known as *Kar*, *Sukhdas*, and *Shali* were superior qualities.²⁹ Bihar also produced quality rice in a large quantity. Abul Fazl, remarks that the Bihar rice "for its quality and quantity is rarely to be equalled." Bernier recorded that fine quality rice was produced in Kashmir.³⁰ In Thatta territory rice was raised in abundance and of excellent quality.³¹ In Awadh, rice was major crop and best quality (*Sukhdas*), rice was obtained for imperial kitchen.³² High quality rice was cultivated in the pargana of Savligarh, Khandesh.³³ *Ganjam*, *Balasore*, and most part of *Orissa*.³⁴ *Allahabad*, *Tarapur*, *Bijapur* kingdom, *Lahore*, *Berar*, *Bimlipatam*,

27 John Pinkerton, *Collection of Best Travels, Journal of Sir Thomas Roe*, p.5.

28 W.H.Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, London, 1927. p. 103.

29 William Foster,(ed.), *Early Travels in India 1583-1619*, Delhi, 1968 (Reprint).Finch , p - 118.

30 Op., cit., Bernier, p -397.

31 Op., cit., *Ain -I*, p -556.

32 Ibid, p -53.

33 Op., cit., Tavernier -I, p -50.

34 Op., cit., Finch, *Early Travels*, p -26.

Machhlipatam, Mangalore, are suitable areas for its growth. *Sukhdas* rice was praised for its quality and flavour.

According to Bernier's account of 1664, he makes a reference to trade in Bengal rice. He writes: "Pre-eminence ascribed to Egypt was due to Bengal rice. Bengal produces rice in such abundance that it not only supplies rice to neighboring but to remote states. It is carried up the Ganges as far as Patna. It was exported by sea to Masolipattam and many other ports of Coromandal. It was also sent to foreign kingdoms, principally to the Islands of Ceylon and the Maldives."³⁵ Abul Fazl stated that the innumerable varieties of rice grown in Bengal, if a single grain of each kind were collected; they would fill a large vase. Besides, Bengal, rice was grown in *Orissa, Bihar, Agra, Oudh, Allahabad, Delhi, Lahore, Multan, Ajmer, Malwa, Khandesh and Kashmir*.³⁶

MILLETS: Millet consists of cheaper food grain, like *Juwar, Bajra, Kondon, Sawan* etc., and formed the Kharif crops. These are grown on poorer soils and regions of deficient rainfall. Juwar was cultivated in *Malwa, Gujarat, Ajmer, Delhi, Lahore, Agra, Allahabad and Multan*. Bernier found millet being grown from Surat to Broach.³⁷ The drier parts of Rajputana and West Punjab were also famous for millets.³⁸ Proceeding from Agra to Patna, 'Tavernier crossed a field of millets and "saw a rhinoceros feeding upon millet canes which a little boy of 10 to 12 years gave him to eat".³⁹ *Juwar* was an important crop in Mughal India; it is grown in those pargana where rainfall is moderate. It was largely consumed by the poorer class. It was major crop of Gujarat,⁴⁰ and Khandesh.⁴¹ The Ain also mentions Juwar being grown in the provinces of *Malwa, Ajmer, Gujarat, Khandesh and Delhi*.⁴² In *Gujarat Juwar and Bajra* were formed the

35 Op., cit., Bernier's *Travels*, I, p. 438.

36 Joannes Da Laet, *The Empire of the Great Mogul*, Edited & translated by John S. Hoyland, annotated by S.N. Bannerjee, Bombay, 1928.p. 71.

37 S. S. Kulshreshta, *The Development of Trade and Industry under the Mughals*, p. 90.

38 Op., cit., Bernier, p. 283.

39 Op., cit., Tavernier *Travels* II, p. 51.

40 Op., cit., *Ain* –I p -485.

41 Ibid p -473.

42 Op., cit., *Ain* II, p p.173,207, 246, 263.

staple food crops. Millets were also found in *Ajmer Gujarat, and Khandesh*.⁴³ The area under cultivation was very much less than now, there were indeed no *Potatoes, Tobacco and Maize* could have been produced, before, 1600. A. D.⁴⁴

Barley grew most abundantly in the central plain, Gujarat and some evidence also noticed in *Orissa*⁴⁵ *Allahabad, Awadh, Agra, Ajmer, Delhi, Lahore, Multan*. Mundy, however, saw fields of Barley on Pipar in Jodhpur.⁴⁶ Barley is recorded in two paragana, Merta and Sajhot by Nainsi, but Barley less cultivated in Kashmir. *Bajra* was the staple food of the majority of the people and hence, was more extensively cultivated than any other food grains. Bajra crops were mostly grown largely in western U.P., and till today is widely consumed in *Lucknow and Allahabad* district.⁴⁷

PULSESES: The chief Pulses were *Moong, Moth, Mash, Arhar Lubia, Peas and Gram* etc; these are grown in the autumn harvest. These formed a great source of providing proteins substances in the construction of the human body and were a very important item in the diet of a vegetarian. Linseed generally was cultivated in *Awadh, Delhi, Lahore, Multan, Malwa, and Ajmer* and particularly grown in *Bihar, Allahabad, Oudh, Delhi, Lahore, Multan and Malwa*.⁴⁸ Tavernier came across a tribe called *Monori* tribe a section of which was engaged in the transport of pulses in the Deccan. During 17th century Gram was extensively cultivated in India. The Rajputs created great demand of Gram for their good breed cavalry horses.⁴⁹

SPICES: The chief Spices were, *Cardamom, Ginger, Pepper, Nutmegs, Cloves and Cinnamon*. Cardamom was one of the most costly and widely used, but its production was quite scarce. It was used by the great nobles and princes in India

43 Op., cit., *Ain –I* pp, 473 -505.

44 Irfan. Habib, *The Agrarian System Of Mughal India. 2nd Revised Edition Oxford.*, 1993, p –42.

45 Op., cit., Fryer –I -. P -297.

46 Op., cit., Mundy –II pp -246 -47.

47 Watt, *Commercial Products of India*, p -370.

48 Op., cit., *Ain –II*, pp -76 -93.

49 B.L. Bhadani, *Peasant, Artisans and Entrepreneurs, Economy of Marwar in 17th Century* New Delhi 1999, p -69.

and Asia, according to Tavernier its price was raised from 100 to 110 rials.⁵⁰ Pepper came from the territory of Bijapur, being sold at Reyapur, a little city in that kingdom.⁵¹ The Hollanders “that purchase it of the Malabaris do not rise many for it, yet several sort of commodities in exchange as *Cotton, Opium, Vermilion, Quick silver* and this was the Pepper which brought into Europe”.⁵² The small pepper came from Bantan and Assam to Surat and sold for 13 to 14 Mahmudis per Maund and was exported to Hrmuz, Basra and the Red Sea.

CASH CROPS

BETEL LEAF: According to Hobson and Jobson “Betel leaf is the leaf of the piper betel, chewed with the dried areca-nut –chummed. Constable, the Editor of Bernier, says that betel, called in Hindustani as pan is from the Sanskrit word leaf. Betel leaf is called tambola in Sanskrit and used it for religious purpose. Abul Fazl mentions six varieties of betel leaf which are, *Bilhari, Kaker, Jaiswar, Kapuri, Kapurkant and Bangla*. Linschoten observed that, the betel leaf was sold in every corner, street or shop of all towns in India in the 16th century. It was also available on every highway for travellers or passengers. It was ready, prepared: there were the betel leaves and the ingredients, i.e. areca, catechu and lime which they also commonly kept in their houses or carried in their hands in a wooden, painted dish.⁵³ Pietro della –Valle who visited Surat in 1623, remarks that people there used to ‘champ or chew’ the pan all day long for the sake of their health or entertainment and delight as some other nations had the evil costume of continually using the tabacco. Whenever a person paid visit to another, betel leaf was the first thing offered. Nor was there’ any society or pastime without it. Pietro had heard the fame of betel leaf in Persia from an Italian Fryer who had been to India and who regarded it a thing not only of great entertainment and even good for the stomach, but moreover of an exquisite relish.

50 Op., cit., Travels of Tavernier: II, p. 129.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

53 J.H.Van Linschoten, *The Voyage of John Huyghen Van Linschoten to the East Indies*, 2 Vols., translated by Arthur Coke Burnell, London, 1885. II., p-64. S.P, Sangar, *Food and Drinks in the Mughal India*. New Delhi. 1999.pp., 138-157.

Manucci at the time of his landing in Surat in January 1656 was surprised to see that almost everybody was spitting something red as blood. He imagined that it must be due to some complaint of the country, or that their teeth had been broken. He says that it was eaten by everybody in India. The only pastime of Indian women, according to him, was to tell stories and eat betels and they could not remain even a few minutes without having the pan in their mouth. It made the lips scarlet and gave a pleasant scent. Manucci has also highlighted the mediclinical value of the betel⁵⁴. Another Italian priest erudite traveler while visiting Surat in 1666 regarded betel a good source of entertainment and even god for stomach. Manucci at the time of his landing in Surat in January 1656 was surprised to see that almost everybody was spitting something red as blood. He imagined that it must be due to some complaint of the country, or that their teeth had been broken. He says that it was eaten by everybody in India. The only pastime of Indian women, according to him, was to tell stories and eat betels and they could not remain even a few minutes without having the pan in their mouth. It made the lips scarlet and gave a pleasant scent.

The contemporary Indian writers have bestowed unstinted praise on the utility of the betel -leaf. As referred to above, Mir Khusrow in Delhi call it, “an excellent fruit like the flower of a garden, the finest fruit in Hindustan.” Abul Fazl says that it strengthen the gums, and makes the hungry satisfied, and the satisfied hungry.⁵⁵ Pietro della Valle wrote as to being of astringent nature, the pan was held good for strengthening the teeth and comforting the stomach. Its ‘biting taste’ delighted those using it. It dyed their lips and mouths red, which also they account gallant.⁵⁶ Manucci opinion is that betel –leaf was very medicinal.⁵⁷ Other travellers like Barbora.⁵⁸ Pyrard De Laval.⁵⁹ Ovington⁶⁰ have also referred to the virtues of pan.

54 Op., cit., Manucci, *Storia de Mogar –I.*, pp -62 -63.

55 Op., cit., *Ain –I –Akbari.*, Text, p -58.

56 Pietro Della Valle, *The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in Indies*, Edited by Edward Gray, 2 Vols., 1892. pp -19 -20.

57 Op., cit., Manucci II, p -128.

58 Barbosa, *a Description of The Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in The Beginning of The 16th Century*: Tr. Stanley. 1866, p -173.

SAFFRON: Saffron was produced in Kashmir. Von Hugel supports Abul Fazl when he remarks that saffron was produced in Pampuk on the right bank of the Jhelum from three distinct varieties of crops. The root of one variety yields flower for 15 years, another for 8 years and the third for 5 years. Speaking of the bewitching sight of the saffron fields Jahangir adds: "Every field was as far as the eye could reach covered with flowers. Half of the produce of the saffron belongs to the Government and the other half to the cultivators. A seer sells for ten rupees". Jahangir supported wages being paid in salt in spite of Akbar's reform.

In Malanpur, saffron plantation was grown on planks which according to Badayni were sometimes stolen. In the month of *Jeth*, saffron is buried under ground and becomes good after one month. The main use of the saffron was in colouring cloth, especially for better yields as also in flavouring dishes. Due to a high local demand, there was no surplus left for export. The ground was carefully prepared before planting the seed in March or April and then it was irrigated with rain –water. Saffron was cultivated in⁶¹ Srinagar & Punjab, Bihar, and Bengal.⁶²

INDIGO: It is also called at (Morinda-Tinotoria), the dye yielding shrub which was imported in Central India. It is a leguminous plant that brings down nitrogen from the heaven into Indian soil and it has peculiar value as an organic manure in a country where animal manure is not available. Indian dyes are obtained from the indigo fera, a genus of leguminous which comprises 300 species, distributed through the tropical and warm temperate regions of the globe, India having about forty.⁶³

59 Francois Pyrad de Laval, *The Voyage of Pyrad of Laval to the East Indies; Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil*, 1608-09, English translation by Albert Grey & H.C.P. Bell, 2 Vols., London, 1887-90. p -68.

60 Op., cit., Ovington, p -122.

61 Fransisco Pelsaert, *The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert* Edited by P.Geyl and W.H.Moreland, Delhi, 1972 (Reprint). p-356.

62 Op., cit., Finch Early Travels p -27.

63 S. S. Kulshrestha, *The Development of Trade and Industry under the Mughals 1526 - 1707*, Allahbad 1964, p. 99.

During Akbar's reign in Agra the important centres of its cultivation were Hindowne (Hindaun), Byana, Panchoona, Bishavar (Bisur), Cannoway (Khanwa) etc.⁶⁴

The methods of making Indigo practiced at, Biana, the main centre of production in Northern India, are described by William Finch, and are substantially the same as those which were followed when the modern industry was at its height. Though there have been various changes in organization and in detail. The most important change is agricultural rather than industrial. The crop used to remain in the ground for three years, yielding annual cuttings, of which the second gave the best dye. With the extension of irrigation, a gradual change took place in agricultural practice until the crop became seasonal.⁶⁵

SUGARCANE: Sugar is derived from two main sources – sugarcane and sugar beet. Sugar cane is a tropical product requiring abundant heat and an exceedingly moist soil. Most rice fields, therefore, are admirably adopted for sugarcane. The juice is obtained from the cane by crushing it between heavy rollers and the sugar is then obtained by evaporation and crystallization. The crop need not be sown every year as the roots grow up year after year requiring much less care and attention.

Under Akbar's time, Bengal was the first best producer in sugar production. Even Babur makes a reference to sugarcane being grown in India.⁶⁶ Ain refers to the kinds of sugar cane: Paunda and Ordinary being grown in the province of *Agra, Allahabad, Outh, Delhi, Lahore, Multan, Malwa and Ajmer*. Sugarcane was double as costly as wheat in the first years of Akbar's reign in practically, all the province.⁶⁷

64 *Indian Year Book, 1947* (Times, Bombay), pp. 754-55.

65 William Foster(ed.), *Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East, 1602-17*, 6 Vols., 1602-13 (1st Volumes), Edited by Federick Charles Danvers, Sampson Low, London, 1869-1906.IV. 237 -356.

66 D.Pant, *Commercial Policy of the Mughals*, D.B.Taraporewala, Bombay, 1930. p. 195.

67 Op., cit., *Ain-II*, Page 77-93.

In Kota state sugar canes were sold at the rate of 1000 per rupee.⁶⁸ In succeeding years Chhahr Gulshan refers to sugar being grown in Aurangabad⁶⁹ and Khulasat, Tawarikh in many other parts including Bihar.⁷⁰ Bernier refers to Bengal produce sugar in large quantities and supplied to Golconda, Karnatic, where little is grown.

FIBRE PRODUCTS: The chief fiber products consist of cotton, wool, silk hemp and jute. For an agriculture country, rope making is an important industry and so this must have not been neglected even in the Mughal times.

COTTON: Cotton requires volcanic soils and as such it has been the product of black soil regions of Malwa plateau and the Peninsular India. It is sub- tropical plant, the perfect culture of which requires (a) safety from frost (b) moderate and regular heat (c) bright sunshine (d) a good but not excessive rainfall (e) a soil in which lime is present (f) salinity of soil and air. Cotton was an autumn harvest in India chiefly grown in province of Agra, Allahabad, Oudh, Delhi, Lahore, Multan and Malwa. Raw cotton was exported only to the Persian Gulf and Arabia. Khandesh and Berar were then; as now the chief centre of fiber cotton. The extensive cotton spinning and weaving carried on in Bengal and Masullipattam. It seems to have been depended upon the local production for its raw material source

The price of cotton was nearly 50 percent higher than that of wheat. India's demand for cotton goods being great due to the tropical climate, Indian looms monopolized the home market for cloth and whatever India could spare was sent to Burma, Arabia, Malacca and East Coast of Africa. At the period under study, India had no cotton pressing machines, so that this demand for raw cotton was supplied by the Levant which had pressing machines. The demand for Indian yarn, however, was continually going up due to its as no country could compete with India in Charka (wheel) spinning.

68 Op., cit., Kulshreshtha, *Trade and Industry under the Mughal* p. 43.

69 Chhar Gulshan. R. Chatterman, Per MSS, SB p. 53.

70 Khulasat. Sujan Rai, Per MSS 86. p. 7.

The chief centers were Navapoura, 104 miles from Surat, a great town of weavers.⁷¹ Lahore where finer cloths were being manufactured,⁷² Sailkot manufacturing tray covers. Muslins are produce in the Provinces of Gujrat, Khandesh and Dacca.⁷³ The other important cities engaged in cotton manufacturers were Cambay, Broach, Sironj, Calicut, Lahore, Agra and Ahmedabad.⁷⁴ Moreland rightly maintains that "cotton at least was more widely grown than is now the case" though the aggregate of production was probably less and it is reasonable to infer the most parts of the country were nearly self sufficient in the matter of clothes.⁷⁵

WOOL: Wool was obtained as at present from many different animals like sheep, camels, goats, and Angora. Although the woollen industry of India is very ancient, flourishing on the cottage scale; under Akbar's times, Kabul was famous as wool producing province and so were Kashmir and western parts of Rajputana. Shawls of Kashmir were famous. According to Abul Fazl, Akbar took interest in the shawls making industry and made earnest efforts to improve the variety. The fine wool of brown, black and white types were found through the Tus Animal. Its shawls were famous for the lightness, warmth and softness. Bernier also praises these shawls which cost varied from Rs. 50/- to Rs. 150/- each. Shawls were also manufactured in Patna, Agra and Lahore for the incensement of woollen industry Akbar ordered for double size shawl of sheep wool.⁷⁶

Rough woollens were manufactured at Fatehpur, Agra and Bengal. Akbar made extra efforts to encourage Kashmir's woollen Industry. In the north India woollen goods were widely used.⁷⁷ The cheapest blanket according to Abul Fazl cost 10 dams or $\frac{1}{4}$ th of a rupee, and, as such, it must have been in common use.

71 Op., cit., *Collection of Travels*, Tavernier, Chapter –III, p -29.

72 *Indian Yearbook 1947*, p. 754 (Times of India Press Bombay)

73 Op., cit., *Travels of Tavernier*, Ch. 10., p. 126.

74 Barbose as quoted by Moreland, *India with Seats of Akbar*, p. 172.

75 J. N. Dasgupta, *India in the 17th Century*, Calcutta. 1916, pp. 220-21.

76 Op., cit., *Ain-II*, Jasrett, pp. 97-101.

77 Rai Chaturman Saksena, *Chahar-Gulshan*, Trans. By Jadu Nath Sarkar Calcutta. 1901, pp. 27, 39. Khulasat, Sujan Rai, p. 22.

Higher strata of society used foreign woollen shawls also.⁷⁸ Gadgil goes on to add that another important less furnishing industry was that of carpet weaving. “The carpet industries were the only urban industry which had a considerable foreign market – this was entirely a cheap carpet industry, the main centers being Mirzapur, Amritsar and Kashmir etc, had considerable progress.⁷⁹ The period under investigation, the industry has been known to exist on domestic scale in Jaisalmer, Marwar and Bikaner as per local traditions.⁸⁰ The upper class or nobility preferred the carpets from Iran and other adjacent countries.

SILK: “Sericulture has been practiced in India for the last 2000 years and a lot of silk used to be exported in days gone by”.⁸¹ There were good results of silk production, the areas must be free from cold so as to enable the mulberry plant to grow and exist. In Akbar’s times, Bengal, including Patna, was an important center of the industry besides Ahmedabad and Kashmir which used to export large quantities of silk to the other two centers⁸² Kasim Bazaar “every year sent 22,000 bales of silk, every bale weighing 100 lbs.” Tavernier says “the Hollanders carry away six or seven thousand bales and would carry away more if the merchants, Tartary and the Mughal Empire did not oppose them. Silk was brought into Surat and Ahmedabad for the manufacture of carpets and Satins worsted with silk and gold threads. Potoles, a sort of silk stuff, very thin and painted with all sorts of flower, were also manufactured with each piece costing Rs. 8 to Rs. 40. At Veetapur manufactured silk pieces were exported by the Dutch to Philippines, Borneo, Java, Sumatra and other neighbouring islands. The Kasim Bazar silk was yellowish like the silk of Persia and Sicily but manufacturers whitened it with a dye made of the ashes of a tree called ‘Adam’s Fig tree’. It was just like Palestine silk. Hollanders transported silk goods from Bengal through Hooghly. According to Barbosa, silk of Gujrat was sent to East Africa and to Peru. The diary of Streyansham master dated 8th November 1676, discloses a description of the silk manufacturers. The soil of Bengal favoured

78 Op., cit., Niccolo Manucci *Storia de Mongor*, Vol. II, quoted in part.

79 Op., cit., *Travels of Peter Mundy* by Hakluyt Society, 1608-67, vol. II, p. 371

80 D.R.Gadgil, *The Industrial Evolution of India* 1944, p -54.

81 *Indian Year Book* 1947, p -754 (Times of India Press, Bombay)

82 Op., cit., Pant, *Commercial Policy of The Mughals*, p -95.

the cultivation of mulberry plants which were gathered to feed the worms. “The soil of Bengal is very fertile being a kind of loose fatt earth and at some places a fatts and. There is not one mountain or hill to be seen about Hooghly or Cassumbazar, the country being all plain and level, and though anything will grow by season of the fertility of the soils, yet firewood is scarce, and timber bad and very dear.”⁸³

Akbar encouraged in every possible way the promotion of silk industry. Ain makes a reference to a kind of Shawl called *MAYAN*, chiefly manufactured in Lahore, consisting of wool and silk. These are stuffs with gold and silk *qasida* and *qalgai*. There are stuffs with gold and silk threads and manufactured in Kashmir.⁸⁴ Raw and manufactured silk was also found in Allahabad, Shahjajhanabad, Bengal, Gujarat, Kashmir and Sailcoat.⁸⁵ Benaras was likewise famous.⁸⁶ Peter Mundy is of opinion that the “sale of skein silk seems to have been a monopoly of the Governor of Bengal and it had to be bought through his agent, the town magistrate (Kotwal) in Patna”.

As pointed out by Moreland, silk-weaving was a minor industry in the times of Akbar. A “substantial proportion of raw silk consumed in India was used for the production of the mixed goods”.⁸⁷

MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTS

There are a few miscellaneous products which played an important role in the social structure of the country. The important products were opium, tobacco and Saffron.

TEA: Everything grown now was grown then also with the exception of *Potatoes*, *Chillies*, *Tobacco* and *Tea*, etc. which were brought to this country by foreigners. Cotemporary chronicles make us believe that some articles of food were

83 Op., cit., J.N. Das Gupta, *India in The 17th Century*, pp -220 -1.

84 Op., cit., *Ain –II*, Tr. Jassett, pp -97 -101.

85 Op., cit., *Chahar-Gulshan*, R. Chatterman, pp. 27, 39

86 Op., cit., Niccolo Manucci, *Storia de Mogar*, vol. –II.

87 Op., cit., W.H. Moreland, *India at The Death of Akbar*, pp -171 -2.

common but some were different, from place to place and class to class, all over India.

According to Radhakumud Mukerji, the Chinese pilgrim, -I -Tsing, who travels in India between 671 and 695 A.D., had referred to tea. Dr. Mukerji observes; "even as far as the 7th century the Indian's took kindly to tea as an antidote to cold according to Ayurvedic texts then current and these texts were much earlier than It-sing's visit to India. The use of tea in India is to be dated much earlier".⁸⁸ Yet another interesting book on the subject has been written by Mr. Montfort Chamney and is entitled, "The Story of Tea Leaf." The author refers to another Chinese legend which traces the origin of the tea plant or Camellia Theifera to about 2700 years before Chirst.

Historically, the first ever mention of tea in England has been ascribed to an act of parliament of 1660, according to which a duty of 8.d. per gallon was to be laid on all tea made and sold in coffee houses. Officers were appointed to visit these houses twice daily to ascertain the quality made there. Yet is suggested that tea was introduced into England in 1666, and the introduction has been ascribed to lord Arlington and lord Orre.⁸⁹

COFFEE: "Coffee, called qahava in Arbia was brought from Abissinia to Yemen in the 15th century by Sheikh Shahab-ud-din Dhabani.⁹⁰ Yemen was a small village, but the sea port in the city Celebee was important.⁹¹ The coffee seed was grown in Mocha and adjacent places.⁹² And was the only commodity of report in the port of Mocha.⁹³ It was from there that it was exported to Turkey, Persia and India.⁹⁴ Edward Terry wrote in 1616 that many persons who did not drink wine on religious grounds took coffee which was 'more healthful than

88 P.K.Gode, *Studies in Indian Cultural History*, Hoshiarpur, 1961, Vol. -I, p -370.

89 G.G. Sigmond: *Tea, Its Effects, Medicinal and Moral*, London, 1839, p -89.

90 *A Voyage to Surat*, p -271.

91 William Daniel, *A Journal*, London. 1702, p -52.

92 *The English Factories in India*, 13 Vols. 1618 -69, ed. W.Foster. Oxford, 1906 -27. 1624 -29, p-213.

93 *A Voyage to Surat*, p -217.

94 Op. cit., *English Factories in India*, 1624 -29, p-213.

pleasant. This black seed boiled in water' was 'very good to help digestion, to quicken the spirits, and cleanse the blood.'⁹⁵

Ovington wrote in 1689: the Hindus "took liberal draughts of tea and coffee to revive their wasted spirits at part of the day."⁹⁶ The Muslims were equally fond of coffee.⁹⁷ Coffee reached England in the 17th century.⁹⁸ It became an important commodity of trade for the East India Company as is evident from references in the English Factories in India.⁹⁹ In 1663, the company in London ordered the Surat Agency for the supply of 20 ton coffee. The latter entered into a contract with an Indian merchant going to Mocha to provide them coffee along with other commodities. Only in this way could the Surat agency meet the demand at home.¹⁰⁰ Occasionally, coffee became a scarce commodity in places like Surat.¹⁰¹

INTOXICANTS: OPIUM: Opium is manufactured from poppy seed which requires finest soil for cultivation. The seed is sown in November and harvested in February and March. The preparation of the ground and the subsequent weeding and watering require much attention. The poppy heads are cut out and scratched into a sharp insfrzs and a milky juice exudes which becomes brown in colour and which after constant exposure to the sun and air is, carefully, collected by the farmer and his family. Marshall observes that it was grown almost everywhere in India, but especially in Malwa and Bihar.¹⁰² Tavernier think that it came from Burhanpur but Manucci and Bernier express that Opium was mostly produced in Bengal.¹⁰³ The important centre of its production was Patna, Bihar, Malwa, Berar, Ghazipur and Khandesh. The cultivation was extended to

95 Op., cit., *Early Travels in India*, p -300.

96 Op., cit., *A Voyage to Surat*, p -180.

97 William Hedges, *The Diary of Sir William Hedges During His Agency in Bengal* 3 Vols., Edited by R.Barlow and Henry Yule, London, 1887-90.II., 29th Oct. 1682.

98 Op., cit., *A Voyage to Surat*, p -271ff

99 Op., cit., *Eng. Factories*, 1630 -33, pp -2; 89; 100; 102; 104; 124; 159. 1651 -54, pp -60; 118. 1665-67, pp -17; 28; 170; 174; 270; 278.

100 Ibid., 1661 -64, pp -187; 88; 210.

101 Ibid., 1665 -67, p -248.

102 John Marshall, *John Marshall in India, being his Notes and observations*, Edited by S.A Khan, London, 1927. p -414.

103 Op., cit., Manucci., op., cit., Vol -II, p -432, Bernier op., cit., p -440.

Rajputana and many cities and towns in the country because the Rajputs and the Mughals used to eat it as an intoxicant as well as medicine.

Bernier maintains that poppy was the main product of Bengal.¹⁰⁴ Opium was exported to Pegu (lower Burma), Java, Malaya, Peninsula, China, Persia and Arabia. The Khandesh opium was exported through Surat and the Bihar opium through Bengal.¹⁰⁵ In Akbar's time, Malwa and Benaras became the chief centre of opium production. Tavernier expressed that Burhanpur was a good town between Agra and Surat for opium Trade. The Hollanders bought in large quantities which they tucked for their pepper. Popy was more valuable than wheat. Moreland finds that, during Akbar's time the average rates of popy were comparatively double (100 to 210) than wheat in mughal Province of Agra Allahabad and Delhi.¹⁰⁶ The preparation of Opium was an old –established art both, in Bihar and Malwa.

WINE: Wine –drinking was a common featre in the 17th century in India. The Mughals, with few exceptions, were fond of spirituous liquor. In South India some people prepared Wine mainly from the sap of the palm tree, while the Mahua – Flower and molasses were used further in North India; the materials used in these area were still in use, and such types of process being transformed under the guidance of the excise department or administration.¹⁰⁷ There were some trees of intoxicant also. From the flowers of Mahwa tree, spirit (araq) was extracted. From the palm tree, a juice called tari was received three times in a day.¹⁰⁸ It was also called *sura* and *nira*.¹⁰⁹ The date palm (Khurma) yielded another intoxicant. If it was drunk fresh it was sweet and pleasant, but if it was kept for a day or more it was exhilarating.¹¹⁰ According to Manucci when it was kept for twelve hours it tasted like beer. It was used by Indians in place of wine.

104 Op., cit., Bernier's Travels, Part I, p. 449.

105 Sarkar, *Studies in Aurangzeb's Reign*, p. 275.

106 Op., cit., Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, p. 103.

107 Op., cit., W.H. Moreland, *India At The Death Of Akbar*, p -159.

108 Op., cit., *Ain -I*, p -75.

109 Op., cit., Manucci, *Storia do Mogar*, Vol. -III, Tr. By W. Irvine Calcutta, 1966, p -176, careri; *a Voyage round the World*. Pt. III ed. And tr. By S.N. Sen, Delhi -1949, p -200.

110 Zahir -al -Din Muhammad Babur, *Baburnama*, Eng. Trans. By A.S. Bevridge in 2 Vols.1st published 1922. New Delhi. 1970. reprint p-509.

From this liquid is manufactured ague, ardent Vinegar and Sugar.¹¹¹ Babur writes “about the juice from date palm” that, “excursion to the village son by the bank of the Chambal River, We met in with people collecting this date palm liquor in valley bottom. A good deal was drunk, no hilarity was felt, and much must be drunk seemingly, to produce a little cheer.”¹¹² Careri says that the liquor from coco tree, “It is so nourishing that Indians live upon it without any other sustenance.”¹¹³ Tavernier mentioned that in Golkunda women run the tari shops. “The king of Golkunda derived huge amount from the tax imposed on tari sale.”¹¹⁴ Achhi wine was prepared from bread and rice mixed with bhang. In order to make a very strong liquid from rice, they soaked the rice and husk in large jars for three or four days until it was fermented and decomposed partially and, subsequently, boiled on over fire several times.¹¹⁵ *Punch* was a famous Indian drink invented, according to Wheeler, by the ‘convivial’ English factors residing here in the 17th century. The word was derived from the Hindi Panch, an elusion to the number of ingredients used, which were brandy, sugar, limes, spice and water. The first ever reference made to this appears in a letter dated September, 28, 1632, written by the Armagoan factors to their counterparts at Petapoly.¹¹⁶ Due to the presence of the Europeans in India, foreign wines also found their way into this country in the 17th century. English beer, white and red wines, beer or Mum or Mom from England and Brunswick in Germany, wines from Spain and Portugal, France and Holland were available in abundance in our country.

MALAGA: Malaga was strong, sweat dessert, wine produced chiefly in Malaga, Spain. Malaga wine also was available in India in the 17th century. On November, 1642, the East India Company ordered that a pipes of Malaga wine were to be distributed between lower (got to the cost) and one for Surat.¹¹⁷

111 Op., cit., Manucci, *Storia do Mogar*, p -177.

112 Op., cit., *Baburnama*, p -509.

113 Careri op., cit., *A Voyage*, p -200

114 Op., cit., Jean Baptiste, Tavernier, *Travels in India*, Vol.-I, Tr. By V. Ball, Delhi -1977, p.128.

115 Jorrdain, p. 132, Ovington, *Voyages to Surat*, p. 143.

116 Tuzk -I -Jahangiri, II, p. 126.

117 Court minutes, 1664 -67, p. 198.

SACK: This strong light colored wine came from Spain, the canary island etc. were known as sack, and always demanded by the English factors.¹¹⁸

TENT: Tent wine was a Spanish red wine largely used in churches for sacramental purpose. It was kept in lether cases as is evident from a letter written by Edward Monox, the chief of the English Factory in Persia. Thomas Roe expressed that he had been offered five bottles of Spanish wine by jahangir on 23rd, September, 1617, at Mandu.¹¹⁹

Grape wine was a common variety imported from Portugal.¹²⁰ The wine of Portugal was worth 40 sols a pint and best was available only for 20 copper coins and was very good and strong. This wine was a trifle sour when it reached Goa where Portuguese wine was available in plenty.

MADEIRA: was a rich, strong, white wine, resembling, sherry, and was made a Madeira (Portugal) at a meeting of the committee of the Company held on Jan, 27, 1646, Rowland Wilson reported that the wine be had at Madeira for 9 pounds sterling per pipe the best, and at 5 pounds per pipe the worst kind.¹²¹

Wine was also imported from France and Holland and from Rhineland. According to Philip Baldaeus, French and Rhenish wines were not strong enough in these hot countries, where the stomach requires 'more lovely cordials', as a little brandy or a moderate share of canary.¹²²

TOBACCO: Tobacco was not grown in India before the times of Akbar. It is believed to have reached India through the agency of the Portuguese and was first established in the province of Gujarat, where the leaf was obtainable in 1613. Gradually, the practice of smoking was introduced. The Portuguese and the Dutch grew it in their colonies. Jahangir prohibited smoking in 1617 A.D.¹²³ In the reign of Shahjahan, no restriction was imposed and tobacco trade developed greatly. Manucci says that in the early years of Aurangzeb's reign the

118 English Factory, 1668 -69, p. 189.

119 Court minutes, 1664 -67, p. 57.

120 English Factory, 1637 -42, p. 212.

121 Court minutes, 1664 -67, p. 196.

122 English Factory, 1642 -45, pp. 16,29,90.

farmers of Delhi paid Rs. 5000 as tax on tobacco alone. It was first introduced in India by the Portuguese in 1605. Sometimes, Akbar enjoyed tobacco on the advice of his physician. Tobacco gained popularity so rapidly that soon a regular trade was established to such an extent that Jahangir had to prohibit it in 1617 only 12 years after its introduction.

The Muslims would enjoy smoking the *Hukka*, especially after meals. It was their chief and customary entertainment after meals. It was usual to see people sitting cross-legged at their doors with *Hukka* pipes in their mouths. Sometimes women too indulged in smoking. Its consumption increased so much that according to Manucci during the reign of Aurangzeb, Rs.5000 were collected as tobacco duty per day in Delhi alone. A large quantity of it was also exported. It was brought to Gujarat by the Portuguese in the closing years of the 16th century, and introduced at Akbar's court in 1604 or 1605, but in spite of the royal orders, people in Gujarat, in the Deccan and in Northern India took a fancy for it, and it seems that in the later years of his reign. Jahangir withdrew the bay. Within a few years, tobacco began to be cultivated on an extensive scale, and by 1623, it became an article of export from the port of Surat.

BHANG: Bhang was another intoxicant commonly used by the poor, who sometimes mixed it with nutmegs and mace, whereas the rich added cloves, camphor, amber, musk and opium to it. In some contemporary records we find reference to Bhang also. Babur was also fond of this intoxicant. Bhang kept one in a pleasant mood, but an excessive dose of it would make one unconscious. Jahangir prohibited the use of Bhang and Suza altogether declaring that they were injurious to health.

DHATURA: It was a common herb that grew in almost every field. The leaf is sharp at the end. From the flower blossom of this plant grew a bud, like that of Poppy, containing small seeds resembling those of melon. The seeds ground and mixed with meat, water or wine, created strange sensations in the person who ate or drank its composition. It made him laugh without any understanding

123 *Tuzak-I-Jehangiri*, Per MSS (SBU), p. 578.

or induced him to sleep. Sometimes it made him sleep in a manner as if he was dead. He could continue in that condition for 24 hours. He regained consciousness only if his feet were washed with cold water.

Garcia De Orta mentions the common use of Dhatura by thieves in India. It produced in the victim temporary alienation of mind, and violent laughter, permitting the thief to act unopposed. Men gave this drug to their women friends to have greater sexual pleasure, without the women detecting its use. When Pyrard was in Goa, many were found to have become pregnant without knowing whence this happened to them. And all this had resulted as a consequence of this drug. An excessive use of dhatura could result in the death of the person consuming it. Herbert Moll writes that, occasionally, dhatura was drunk by some persons after powdering it in water. It intoxicated them like strong liquor; Maid servants used it for robbing their mistresses. Slaves and servants administered the herb to their masters whom they robbed by breaking open their chests.¹²⁴

POST: "Post was well mixed up in water until a black bitter extract was formed. This solution enormously increased sexual power, though it destroyed natural strength and after two or three years rendered the person using it absolutely impotent and unfit for any kind of activity."¹²⁵

POPPY: The cultivation of poppy, from which opium was extracted, was another important superior crop, and was taxed highly in the time of Akbar. It was used as an intoxicant,¹²⁶ and was produced in the province of Agra, Awadh, Allahabad, Delhi, Lahore, Multan, Malwa, and Ajmer.¹²⁷ It was also, most probably, grown in the table land of the Deccan and in Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, and Golkonda. It was demanded in Bengal and other parts of eastern India, and was

124 S.P.Sangar, *Food And Drinks in Mughal India*, New Delhi 1999, p -171 -73. Prof, S. P. Sangar's book is highly useful in emanating information.

125 Op., cit., Manrique, *Traveles -I*, p-59.

126 Op., cit., Hawkins, *Early Travels in India*. p -71, 116, 142.

127 Op., cit., *Ain -II*, p -78 -117.

dispatched there in large quantities, through sea routes.¹²⁸ It was exported to Pegu also.¹²⁹

CONSUMPTION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE

FLOUR MILL: About the utilization of food grains, Moreland express that the preparation of flour and meal was, in general, a purely domestic undertaking, as it is still commonly popular at the present day. It is possible that a certain amount of grain was milled at Surat and other ports in connection with the provisioning of ships and at inland towns to meet the needs of travellers and visitors. The organization can only have been rudimentary, consisting probably of a certain number of women using ordinary domestic hand -mills under the control of a grain merchant.¹³⁰

OIL MANUFACTURE: The industry of oil pressing was probably carried on by the exceedingly primitive method. The extraction of oil from the oil seeds also used to take place within the village through the familiar process of the oil press (*ghani*). The oil men formed as important industry classes and roughen Gail was imposed on the making of oil.¹³¹

GINNING AND SPINNING: Presumably both ginning and spinning were usually carried on by the grower and his family; Thevenot indicates that in some localities specialization had already begun; near Ahmadabad he met a gang of workmen who had no fixed home but travelled from village to village, ginning and cleaning cotton, or doing any other work that was available. We may infer that the 17th century was beginning to experience the need which has now been effectively met by the introduction of ginning mills throughout the principal cotton tracts.

128 Op., cit., Finch *Early Travels in India* Ed. Foster p-1824.

129 Ibid -34.

130 Op., cit., W.H. Moreland, *India At The Death Of Akbar*, pp -156 -57.

131 Jamini Mohan Banerjee, *History of Firuz Shah Tughlaq* (Delhi, Munshiram, 1967), p.123.

DYEING INDUSTRIES: Barbosa also refers to coloured silk and cotton clothes as well as finely worked and painted quilts and testers of beds.¹³² There is no definite information about Calico printing before the sixteenth century. Moti Chandra finds the words *Chhimpaka* and *Chhipa* in the 14th and 15th century sources which might respectively mean female and male painter.¹³³

SUGAR INDUSTRY: Sugarcane was cultivated in different parts of Northern India for production of Sugar. The ripe sugarcanes were pressed and crushed in sugar mills called '*Gharkh*' and '*Jawaz*' and revenue accrued to the government from the tax on its juice (*Wajah-I-Asri*). There were the several varieties of sugar, such as soft sugar (*khand*) and the *crystalized white khand*. Unrefined sugar (Gur) was in wide use among the poorer classes. Bengal produced sugar for internal consumption as also for export.¹³⁴

Sugarcane juice was also used for the manufacture of wine. Sugar was produced in various parts of the country. Indian sugar was of three types: (I) the coarse product known as *Jaggery*, *Jaggery*, or *Gur*, still the commonest form of sugar in India, which was not handled by exporters. (II) A white sugar of fine grain known as "*Powered sugar*". (III) And large crystals, more thoroughly refined and much more costly, which the merchants knew as "*Candy*".¹³⁵ But its production in Gujarat was not sufficient for local consumption, let alone for export. Among re-exports, sugar was frequently sent to Europe. The English often contracted for its supplies with Banjaras from Agra.¹³⁶ According to Abul Fazl, sugar was sent to different distant places from Agra.¹³⁷ The English Factors (1630 -33) in Gujarat found it as a profitable merchandise for shipment to Persia as pointed out by Moosvi.¹³⁸

132 op., cit., Barbosa, Vol. 1, pp. 141-142.

133 Moti Chandra, "*Costumers and Textiles in The Sultanate Period*", *Journal of Indian Textile History*, VI (1961), 17, 40.

134 K.M. Ashraf, *Life amd Condition of the people of Hindostan*, 1935. p. 134.

135 Op., cit., W.H. Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*. P -138.

136 Letter Received... Vol. V. p -115. VI -280. E.F. 1618 -21, p -102, 1624 -29. p -235 -6, 270., W.H. Moreland, *-From Akbar to Aurangzeb* -138 -9.

137 Op., cit., Abul Fazl, *Ain -I -Akbari*. Vol. -I, p -224.

138 Shireen Moosvi, *The Economy of the Mughal Empire*, (Delhi 1987), p -383.

FRUITS: The Indian peasant, moreover, made use of the developed Indian large gardens and practiced horticulture for pleasure and profit as proved by the evidence of 'gain', 'Brahmaincal' and 'Buddhist texts.' Sultan Firoz Shah too is well known for his interest in horticulture. He laid 1,200 gardens in the neighborhood of Delhi. Different types of *grafting* methods were also in vogue. Sweet cherry was introduced in Kashmir through grafting by Akbar's governor, Ali Quli Afshar. He also increased the cultivation of '*Apricots*', by same means; by it, '*Mulberry*', too was made to yield edible fruits. During Shahjahan's reign, grafting began to be widely used and is said to have resulted in an improvement in the quality of '*Oranges*'.

The Mughal emperors in general and Akbar in particular had a special liking for the fruits which were locally produced in several provinces and even imported from the North West countries to meet the demand. Akbar looked upon fruits as one of the greatest gifts of the creator and paid much attention to them. Abul Fazl writes : the horticulturists of Iraq and Turan have settled here and the cultivation of trees in a very flourishing state. Fruits of numerous varieties were cultivated: *musk –melon, water –melon, apple, grapes, orange, guava, pomegranate, mango, date, fig, apricot, banana, pine –Apple, Pear*, and various kinds of *Berries* and *Singharas* were grown in many parts of the country particularly in Kashmir, and in the *Gubas* of Lahore, Delhi, Agra, Allahabad, Awadh, Bengal, Bihar, Malwa, Multan, and Ajmer.

According to Finch, *Peach, Mango, Apricot*, and *Walnut* were grown in Sahrind (Punjab), Melon in Bhakkar and Sind.¹³⁹ The *small Melon, Guava, Pomegranate* were grown in dry land in Thatta (Sind).¹⁴⁰ Grapes were main produce of Ahmadabad, Hasanpur in U.P. Hyderabad, and Hasilpur in central province.

Mangoes were in Golkanda, Deccan province,¹⁴¹ Kuch Bihar, Malwa, Allahawad, Baroda, and Thatta province in Sind and South India.¹⁴² Toddy in

139 Op., cit., *Ain –I*, p -67.

140 Hamilton Pinkerton, p -306.

141 Op., cit., Tavernier, p -102.

Surat¹⁴³ Pomegrnate in Surat, Jodhpur, Golkanda Satgaun in Bengal,¹⁴⁴ Thatta in Sind,¹⁴⁵ Apricots & Walnuts in Kashmir¹⁴⁶ and Sahrind in Punjab.¹⁴⁷ Pineapple in Salret,¹⁴⁸ and Deccan Assam, Kuch Bihar, in Bengal.¹⁴⁹ Pineapples were also grown in imperial garden at Agra,¹⁵⁰ Bihar, Surat, Golkanda, and Goa.¹⁵¹ Salt also found from banana stem.

The Ain -I- mentions an abundance of fruits in Orissa and¹⁵² Assam. *Water malon* was in Sind, Kistwar, Kurnool and Delhi.¹⁵³ *Coconut* was grown in Bombay¹⁵⁴ Assam and Goa.¹⁵⁵ *Bananas* were found in Goa, Cannanore¹⁵⁶ Golkanda, Surat and Agra.¹⁵⁷ etc.

Horticulture too witnessed some important developments during the Mughal period. The techniques of grafting and its application led to an improvement in the quality of citrus fruits and to the introduction of sweet cherry in Kashmir. They succeeded in producing the well known grafted variety of mango. Three new fruits were received from new world, namely, the pineapple, papaya and cashew nut. The guava came later.¹⁵⁸

The Mughal emperor spared no efforts in encouraging horticulture. In Akbar's reign skilled horticulturist came from Iran and Turan and settled in India.¹⁵⁹ Two special officers called as Darogha-I-baghat, superintendent of

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- 142 Op., cit., Fryer -II, p -84.
 - 143 Op., cit., Manucci II p -169. *Downton Purchas III* p -261., Fryer -I, p -298.
 - 144 Op., cit., *Ain -I*, p -391.
 - 145 Hamilton Pinkerten, p -306.
 - 146 Op., cit., Bernier p -397. Pelsaert p -35.
 - 147 Op., cit., Manucci II p -186.
 - 148 Op., cit., Careri p -179.
 - 149 Op., cit., Bernier p -438.
 - 150 Op., cit., *Babarnama -II* Tr. Bev. P -508 -9.
 - 151 Linschoten -II, p -19.
 - 152 Op., cit., *Ain -I*, p -72.
 - 153 Op., cit., Bernier p -250.
 - 154 Op., cit., Ovington, p -85.
 - 155 Op., cit., Della Valle -II, p -202.
 - 156 Op., cit., Tavernier, p -186.
 - 157 Francisco Palsaert, *Jahangir's India: The Remonstratie of Francisco Pelsaert*, Eng. Tra. W.H. Moreland and P.Geyl, Delhi, 1972; First published 1925. dutch Traveller; Brief but perceptive account., p -49.
 - 158 Op., cit., Irfan Habib & Tapan Rai Chaudhary, ed, *The Cambridge Economic History of India* p -218
 - 159 Op., cit., *Ain -I*, Abul Fazl p -68.

gardens and Darogha –I –Menakhana. Superintendent in charge of dry fruits, figure prominently in the cotemporary records. It was a ruler of Kashmir, Mirza Haider who started the planting of fruit trees in a systematic manner by the process of grafting.

FOREST PRODUCE: There were extensive forests covering most parts of the country. The wider extent of forests in the Mughal times and the prevalence of wild animals in areas which were thickly populated, are attested by various contemporary records. The forests extended much further into *United Provinces, Bihar, Bareilly, Gorakhpur, Muzaffarpur, Agra, Bengal, Gogra, Azamgarh, Malwa, Malawar, Kathiawar, Sunderban, Jessore, Faridpur, Noakhali, Bakarganj, Khulana, and Rahimabad Pargana of Bari Doab.*

But during the Mughal age there was the problem of deforestation. Forests provided hiding place not only to ferocious animals but also to unsocial elements, rebels, criminals and dacoits. Therefore, Akbar followed the policy of reclamation of forest land for the purpose of cultivation. Neither he nor his successors realized the importance of the forest. In general, forest was a hub of economic prosperity of the country, so their conservation and scientific preservation was a fundamental duty of the Emperor as well as society. Nevertheless Forests in the Mughal age did provide employment to a large number of *wood cutters, sawyers, carters, carriers, raftsmen*, and other working people who cut wood, cleared the forest and provided numerous variety of timber for building conveyances, residential houses, furniture, boats, etc.

Forests provide us some valuable articles which fulfil our domestic necessities, such as *timber, fuel, bamboos, leaves, fibers, grass, gum, sandal*, and other fragrant wood and drugs formed cheap raw material from this source. Forest produce is divided into two main heads. (i) Major produce i.e. *timber and fire wood* and (ii) minor produce comprising all other products such as *bamboos, leaves, fruits, fibres, grass, gums, resins, barks and animal products* etc. The chief raw materials from this source are as follows.

Material for Paper Manufacturing: Paper which was required for official work on a large scale, and also by the private individuals. It was manufactured from, wood –pulp, bamboo, various grasses and rags obtained from trees in the forests. It was a milestone in the history of man kind. The manufacture of paper created a cultural revolution. Early travellers in this part of the country “noticed that all writing was done on palm leaves, and as late as 1625, A.D., when Della – Valle obtained a specimen manuscript, it was written for him on palm leaves”.¹⁶⁰ But other sources draw light that, in Akbar’s time the best quality paper was manufactured from wood-pulp in Lahore and Rajgir (Bihar). The introduction and spread of the paper making industry in the North –East and Western meditation was one of the main technological achievements of Islamic civilization. It facilitated the production of books on an unprecedented scale, and in less than a century hundreds of thousands of manuscripts spread throughout the Islamic countries.¹⁶¹ There was a considerable progress in the production of paper in the 17th century. During the reign of Aurangzeb, the Paper was also manufactured in Awadh. In the period under study, paper was not manufactured from bamboo and grasses. The education was not developed and was conducted by methods which still survive in which ‘very little paper is used’. Paper was used in ‘public offices’ by merchants for their accounts and by scholars and calligraphists in manuscripts but there were no printed books, no newspapers or posters. In fact, it is concluded that the articles of stationery were less in numbers, and where only found in Bihar and Lahore. During Akbar’s reign, the best quality paper was manufactured in Oudh and Bihar.

FURNITURE: From the luxurious life of the Mughal Emperor, Akbar, it was evident that he had enjoyed exquisite varieties and fancy items of furniture. Furniture used by the general population was very meagre. The chief manufacturers of wood included bed-sheet stands, chessboards, stools, ink stands, ornamental boxes and ordinary things of common use. The wood of Teak, Sesum, Babul, Mango and Sandal were generally used by the community. Barbasa mentions generally that the wood working industry was limited by the

¹⁶⁰ Op., cit., Moreland, *India at The Death of Akbar*, p -164.

absence of demand for its products rather than by any scarcity of material. The state of Gujarat manufactured ink-stands, boxes with engravings.¹⁶² Speaking of the country as a whole De-Laet says, they (The poor people) have very little furniture and even in the houses of nobles, little furniture was used except in the women's apartments where one may see a great quantity of gold and silver vessels.¹⁶³ Linscotten, writing of the west coast, says that the household stuff of the people is mats of straw both used to sit and lie upon and their tales and table clothes and napkins are made of plantain leaves.¹⁶⁴

MATERIALS FOR BOAT AND SHIP BUILDING

High class timbers formed the materials for boats and ship building. The forest of *Bengal, Agra, Allahabad, Thatta, Lahore Malabar* supplied the required type of timbers. The Ain makes a reference to frequent travelling by boats in Bengal and Gujarat provinces. Speaking of Bengal, Abul Fazl says "Travelling by boats was comfortable especially in the rainy season and boats also were used for different purpose in war, carriage and sailing."

BOAT BUILDING: There was also, along the northern regiment of the western coast, a typically Indian construction technique termed *Vadhera* by Gujarati boat builders in which Z shaped grooves were carved into the facing sides of the planks which were fastened from the interior by long curved nails.¹⁶⁵

On same vessels the rudder was attached with ropes; on others it was fastened by means of iron pintles and gudgeons cotton strips were put in the grooves with a layer of mixed native resin so that the planks fitted closely to each other. The planking was then drawn together in the following manner. Four holes were drilled in the planking at 1.50 meter intervals of and adjoining strakes and

161 Ahmad .Y. Al -Hassan Donald. R. Hill, *Islamic technology an illustrated History*, Cambridge University Press. London. 1986, p. 190 -91.

162 Op., cit., Moreland, Op. cit., p. 162.

163 Op., cit., De. Laet, *Empire of the Mughals*, pp. 86-90.

164 Op., cit., Moreland, quoted in *India at the seat of Akbar*, pp. 172.

165 Op., cit., *English Factories*, 1646-50, p-90, 1668-69, p-79.

lashing passed through them and set taught by means of a tapered plug driven in between the lashing and planking. Every 20 centimeters, curved iron nails were driven through them. The technique was considered to be superior to all others and ensured a longer lasting water tight hull. There was, however, one disadvantage the repair of damaged planks was rendered difficult by this method. A special type of attacking boat used to capture a fort.¹⁶⁶ Again in his description of Gujarat he says, "Vessels sail from and trade of Ghogahi. The cargoes are put into small ships called Tavari which transported them to khambayat".¹⁶⁷ Due to public interest in sea routes boat and ships making industries flourished. Ship building industry, generally, centered with sea coast. The great bulk of commerce in the Indian sea was carried in ships and boats which were built in India. The small boats required for the coastal trade in Bengal as well as Sind and the aggregate volume of shipping was, therefore, very high when measured by contemporary standards.¹⁶⁸ Abul Fazl mentions that 40000 boats were used for transport at Thatta. Teak wood was so good for the manufacturing of the ships. The details regarding the types etc has been given in the subsequent chapter.

GUM-LAC: Gum lac is a kind of wax produced with barks of standing trees. "Gum lac came from Pegu and Bengal where it was very dear. Bengal and Orissa had a monopoly on it". It served a two-fold purpose, first a brilliant red dye was extracted from it, then it was used in varnishing toys, and the making of women's bangles. It was immensely consumed by the public. The lac was mostly used in making bangles, toys and other things was quite popular in Gujarat & especially at Surat were full fledged industries. Gum lac was used for dying purpose and polishing materials for household furniture. The goldsmith used it to filling up in ornaments.¹⁶⁹ Bernier has described that lac and wax of Bengal as of

166 Op., cit., *Ain*. Jarrett, (II part), p. 134.

167 Ibid., p. 246.

168 Ibid., p. 170.

169 Shirin Moosvi, *Man and Nature*, p -18.

the best quality.¹⁷⁰ Gum lac was also received from forest of the Gujarat, Malawar, Gingely, Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Malwa, and Bijapur.¹⁷¹

Regarding *Gum lac*, Bowery, Bernier, and Tavernier observe that it was produced in the kingdom of Bengal. He also informed that it was costly in that area because people expected from it the beautiful scarlet colour which was used for dying and painting cotton clothes. The English company exported approximately its 150 chests annually.¹⁷² The Dutch was exported red colour *Lac* to Persia. The lac bangle and toy industry flourished mostly in Gujarat (especially at Surat) but more or less it must have been diffused in every part of India.¹⁷³

MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTS: The forest products such as cloves, spikenard, aloe-wood, sandal, amber, and camphor and other fragrant woods and drugs were considered important articles for internal consumption and exported to foreign countries. Red-bakham wood was used for cosmetics as well as medicine and hair dyes. During the Mughal age wood products of the forests were also made to yield perfumes. From the forest of western Ghat and Mysore we yielded black and sandal wood. It was supplied by the Portuguese to the gentry in Agra and other places. The Portuguese brought sandal wood from the Dutch and transported it to Malacca, Goa and Cambay. Babul bark used for tanning, it came from the provinces of Lahore, Agra and Rajasthan.¹⁷⁴

PASTORAL PRODUCES: The people of such a country have a great number of *Cows, Sheep, Goats and Buffaloes*. There is no lack of venison of various kinds *red Deer, fallow Deer and Antelope*. There is great store of hares, wild and tame *Fowl*, and abundance of *Hen's Geese, Ducks, Pigeons, Turtle-Doves, Partridges, Peacocks and Quails*. They have also numerous varieties of fish. Flesh and fish are to be bought at low rates, as if they were not worth the

170 Op., cit., Bernier Travels, p -44.

171 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, *Mughal Economy, Organisation and working*, Calcutta, 1987, p -58.

172 Bowery, op., cit., pp -121 -22, 132, Bernier op., cit., p -440. Tavernier op., cit., Vol -II, pp.18 -19.

173 Sarkar, J. N., *Studies in Aurangzeb's Reign*, XVII, p. 281.

valuing.¹⁷⁵ Milk and milk products, wool and leather were important articles of trade. It appears that Ghee was major pastoral article in Marwar. Rural as well as Urban people used to take Ghee in large quantity, generally, in the country and, particularly, in the state like Gujarat.

Besides there was a tax on Ghee production known as *ghiyai* in *pargana phalodi*. The state used to impose different rates on Ghee prepared from the milk of different animals. The association of agriculture with pastoralist varies, geographically as well as historically. In the larger part of the Indian plains, the pastoral sector has for long been a more adjunct of agriculture. The need to have draught animals for plough-drive and water lift has been primary, while that of dairy and other needs (Milk, wool.) is secondary. Certain conclusions can be drawn from the above table: first, there used to be a cattle census for taxation purpose. Secondly, there were uniform grazing rates all over the state; thirdly, there was stability in grazing rates for at least 50 years till the 17th century; and finally, term *jhungi* (hut-a temporary settlement) indicates that the state used to levy a tax on pastoral communities who were semi –nomadic. Nainsi particularly mention the exact location of posture land in villages and towns and its kind -one was dry pasturage located in the uplands, spread over various Parganas; the other was located along river banks, or in the low- lying areas.

The best quality of grass named, *pata* (a kind of leaf grass) was probably grown in the low-lying zones where the pasture land was situated along the river and large quantity of fodder might be produced there. The majority of the towns in Marwar used to have allotments of pasture land for the grazing of cattle kept by towns men in 1605, Raja Suraj Singh, allotted a piece of land of 22 hals (plough) to the Qusba of Siwan. There were two extensive grazing grounds near the Qusba of Sojhat. A deliberate attempt was also made to irrigate the pastures specifically by constructing wells or tanks. Pastures land was irrigated by the overflowing water of the river of that area.

174 Op., cit., *Ain -I*, 83 -87. Tarvernier Vol. -II. Op. cit., p-18, 21.

175 Ibid., p. 142.

From the record of Nainsi, it becomes clear that the pasture were wide spread near the forests that covered much of the South eastern part of Aravalli range and the Luni basin. The Pargana Sojhat had numerous pastures, which were spread, all over the territory. On the other hand, there were scattered pastures on the North-Western side of Pokran.

MILK: From the very beginning of History, milk has been an important item of the Indian diet. The abundance of cattle wealth ensures the constant and continuous supply of milk and milk products. Cow provided milk and other milk products. Ox was absolutely essential for ploughing the fields and also for transportation. There are frequent references to the use of milk and milk products in the cotemporary Hindi literature. Milk was also known as goras.¹⁷⁶ The milk of buffaloes, goats and cows was available in the streets in towns.¹⁷⁷ It was taken with sugar candy.¹⁷⁸ In the whole country it was available at cheap rates. Linschoten expressed that Butter and butter products were brought from Thatta and Bhakkar for export. He also praised the Butter products of Sind.¹⁷⁹ Regarding Bengal butter Fryer states that, "It is such plenty that although it is a bulky article to export, yet it is sent by sea to several places."¹⁸⁰

MINERALS: Minerals are indispensable to man. The food he eats, the clothes he wears, nay even his own body, they are all constituted of a variety of minerals and / or of their salt. From the earliest times, when man first appeared on this planet, down to the present times, the whole story of the ascent of man, which is a measure of his growing culture and civilization, has been linked with minerals and mineral substances. From the primitive to the most sophisticated modern man, in all stages of human advancement, man had to look to minerals for his sustenance, decorations festivities and even for his funeral rites. The earliest man in his efforts to hunt for food as well as for self protection would have resorted to the use of hard rocks and minerals like quartz, flint and chert which

176 Op., cit., Linschoten , I, p -301.

177 Op., cit., *Ain* –Text, p -45.

178 Varind Satsai, 577.

179 Op., cit., *English Factories*, 1637 -41, p -136.

180 Fryer John, *A new Account of East India and Persia being Nine year Travels*, 1672 -81, ed William Crooke, Vol –II London, 1912, p -42.

he then found so abundantly all around him. Minerals being thus so important for man, it is fortunate that all mineral and mineral substances utilized by him occur in the earth's crust. He knew about the commonly known minerals, especially those of practical use in industry, in the arts and in agriculture and their occurrence and distribution in the earth's crust. It is necessary to learn briefly about the constitution of the earth for a proper understanding of the origin of the minerals.¹⁸¹

Gold availability has been found in one of Ashoka's famous rock edits in Maski. Again in the Indian vedic mantras written probably in 2000 B. C. there is frequent use of gold and silver. It is mention that during Sradh and other religious ceremonial occasions only silver vessels should be used and the fees of priests who conduct such rituals should be paid in gold. Both Alberuni and Heiun Tsang have given an eloquent testimony regarding the knowledge of alchemy possessed by the Indians of those days, especially by the Chemist, Nagarjuna (Bodhisttva). The ancient Indians appear to have adopted the process of distillation and calcinations of minerals and their ores. They appear to have prepared a variety of useful medicines from minerals such as the *shanp abhrak* and *Abhrak bhasma* from *mica*, *vermilion* from *lead* and per chloride of *mercury* and arsenious acid from arsenic. 'Ayurveda', as the ancient science of medicine is called, is replete with a catalogue of *herbs*, *minerals* and *metals*, which have remarkable curative properties. Minerals, being thus, so important for man, it is fortunate that all minerals and mineral substances utilized by him occur in the earth's crust.

The most revolutionary landmark in the history of economic minerals was that man started systematic mining for obtaining the minerals he needed. In contrast to the Ancient period, there was not much of revolutionary development till the 13th century when for the first time, commercial production of coal started in England and western part of *Europe*. By the year 1600, the yearly production of coal in England touched the one million tone mark. In India after the advent of the Muslims, the use of tin, diversified from an alloying metal to a coating

181 Krishnaswamy, India's Mineral Resources, New Delhi, 2nd Ed., 1979, pp. 1-4.

material for protection against acid and metallic copper poisoning. Barring such strong events, the trend in use of minerals that was set in the Ancient period, more or less continued during the medieval period.

GOLD: Abul fazl told that the metal being washed from silver sand in some parts of northern India, a practice which shall survive.¹⁸² Sujan Rai tells of the mining of gold in the Provinces of Shah Jahanabad (Delhi); Oudh; Bengal and from some rivers of the Punjab like Beas. Chatterman closely follows him and adds *Allahabad, Agra* and the above list. According to Hashmatullah Khan, Gold collected in the form of sand from the Madhumati and Indus River in *Kashmir*. It is collected from sand of Jhelum River in *Punjab*.¹⁸³ Gold collected from the sands of Sonrekha River (Bengal). The collection of the gold dust collected from Saurashtra River in *Gujarat*. Gold collected from sands of Ganga river, gold also obtained from Earth around the old city of Awadh in *Uttar Pradesh*.¹⁸⁴ Tipara – small amount of gold collected from sand washing in *Bengal*.¹⁸⁵ Gold washed from river sand. Tavernier puts the gold mines in the South parts of *Assam*.¹⁸⁶ Gold was used in coinage, ornaments of the seraglio and the public and in some important industries concerning embroidery in Gujarat.¹⁸⁷ One round mohur “bought one tola of gold and of ten ‘ban’ in Akbar’s times.”¹⁸⁸

COAL: the word “Coal” is a very popular term. It was formerly written as “cole” and could be traced to the Sanskrit root “Kala” which means black. Coal is rightly called the “Black Diamond” and is more valuable than diamond in terms of total monetary transaction that are involved through out the world. There is hardly any reference regarding the existence of coal in Western world.

In ancient India, during the Harappa -Mohen Jodaro –indus valley civilization (C-3000 -1500 B.C), it is cited in the literature that for extraction of

182 Op., cit., *Ain II*, Jarett, pp. 132, 285, Vol. III, p. 10.

183 Kangra Distt. Gaz., 1924 -5, p -323.

184 Op., cit., Finch Early Travels, p -176.

185 Op., cit., Tavernier –II, p -275.

186 Op., cit., Tavernier –II, p -281.

187 Op., cit., *Ain II*, Jorrett, p. 247.

188 Op., cit., *Ain I*, Blochman, p. 38.

metal coal was used. According to Kautilya's account coal was used for various purpose and was known as 'stone coal'.

From Kautilya's arthashastra (298 -320 B.C.) it is known that mining and metallurgy flourished during the period. The coal mining areas, for example, there is a place called Angar pathra near dhanbad, which means 'stone coal' , Kali pahari (black hill or hill of coal), Baraka means best ore or mineral or best coal, since at barakar coal is abundantly available. In India; in the Valley of Damodar River, coal mining started on commercial basis as 1774. It is rather hard to believe that Indians did not know the use of coal when in India iron and steel were made two centuries before B.C. by the Aryan civilization.

The industrial growth of a country and its prosperity depend to a very great extent on its energy resources and how best the recourses are utilized. Also there is a correlation between the Per Capita income and consumption of energy. Coal happens to be the basic source of energy in most of the industrially developed countries of the world. India's prosperity will depend on how best we use our coal as primary input in future.¹⁸⁹

DIAMONDS: Precious stones like Rubies and Jade are produced in Bengal and Turquoise in Toda Bhim but in latter case, the expenses of working them exceeded their income. De Laet write about Golkunda mines that in this kingdom very rich diamond mines were discovered a few years ago by an accident. The king was in the habit of letting out these mines at an annual hire of 30, 00,000 pagodas on the condition that all the diamonds found weighed by more than ten carats, should be brought to his territory.¹⁹⁰ In 1628 prohibition was placed on the digging of the mine in Golconda so that the price of diamonds might not fall as a consequence of over production. More than 30,000 workers were employed for digging, transporting the soil in the baskets and baling out water by a slow and laborious method.¹⁹¹ The method of excavation was not very

189 M.P. Singh, *Text book of Coal (Indian context)*, Tara book agency. Baranasi. 2000, pp. 1-4.

190 Op., cit., *Ain II*, Jarrett, p. 192 (Bengal p. 132, Birgarh p. 238).

191 Op., cit., De Laet, *Empire of the Great Mughal*, pp. 75-76.

intricate. Shafts were derived straight downwards to a depth of 12 to 15 fathoms and earth of reddish colour with veins of yellowish or whitish chala was excoriated and collected over a flat surface to a depth of four or five thumbs. After the soil got dried up, it was pulverized with stones and flints were picked up and thrown away. The remainder was passed through a sieve. Gems were discovered some plenty and others few. Tavernier mentions diamond mines in Golkunda Kolar, Soumelpur (Bengal), Wariagari etc. He writes two per cent on all purchases of diamonds is paid to the king who receives also a royalty from the merchants for permission to mine.¹⁹² Raolcunda and Kollur diamond weighed by mangelins ($1\frac{3}{4}$ carats or 7 grains). But at Soumelpur Bengal, (they weighed by Rattis Red Seed). One Ratti equalled $\frac{7}{8}$ th of a carat or $3\frac{1}{2}$ grains.¹⁹³ Tavernier himself being a great Jeweller, had classified the diamond into four categories: perfect stones, perfect superior stones, imperfect superior stone, middling and the worst stone.

There was another mine called Kolar. The third mine was located in Bengal Soumelpur near R. Gonel, This mine is four kos from (Rohtas), the famous in Asia.¹⁹⁴ There are three major sites of Diamond mines situated in south and one at Kalinjar in *Uttar Pradesh*.¹⁹⁵ Diamonds were also collected from the mine of Sambalpur, Baijagarh in *Central India*,¹⁹⁶ and collected in madaran sarkar in *Bengal*.¹⁹⁷ The size of labour force 60,000 is given by Tavernier in *the Deccan (East)*.¹⁹⁸ Kollur and Karnool were the major mine of diamond in *South India*.¹⁹⁹

SALT: Salt was obtained from three sources viz., (a) By evaporation from sea water, (b) Sambhar Lake, (c) Rock salt mine. Salt was greatly consumed in Bengal. The Khulasat-ut Tawarikh and other contemporary works give the detailed methods of obtaining salt from the Sambar Lake as well as the Punjab

192 Ibid., p. 76.

193 Op., cit., Pant, *Commercial Policy of the Mogul*, pp. 211-212.

194 Op., cit., Tavernier, *Travels*, Vol. I, p. 135.

195 Op., cit., *Ain -I* -p -424.

196 Op., cit., *Ain -I* -p -477.

197 Op., cit., *Ain -I* -p -39.

198 Op., cit., Tavernier -II -p -75.

rock salt mines. Near Sambhar city there existed, as at present, a lake of 4 kos in length and 1 kos in breadth with extreme salinity. Within the lake, there used to be tracts of land like the paddy fields. After rosining to soil with the spade they fill into the brim with water of its lake. In 15 or 16 days during which time the land absorbs water, all these tracts of land became full of salt. Having dug it with the spade and thrown it upon the banks by sprinkle water, the earth becomes separated from it and pure salt comes out. It became blue, red or white, several lac of rupees worth are annually sold and the imperial government levies a salt tax.²⁰⁰

Khulasat adds that salt is extracted in Doab Sind near the town of Shamrabad the foot of the salt-range and is called "*Lahori Namak*" or Sendori. The range in Zafarnama and the Akbarnama has been called "koh-I-Juda" the whole range is of salt.²⁰¹ Khulsat also mentions the existence of salt mines at Thatta, Oudh and Multan.²⁰² The artisans of Shamrabad were highly skilled for the manufacture of big salt dishes, candle sticks etc.

Salt was duly taxed, but the rates of duty do not appear to be on record, except for the mines of the Punjab, where in Akbar's times the charges were considerably more than locally tanned.²⁰³ Salt is found in mines of Koh-I-Juda and Bhangot in *Punjab*. According to Sujan Rai that these two mines yielded several hundred thousands of mans of salt every year. Salt is obtained from Sambhar Lake in *Rajasthan*.²⁰⁴ The salt produced in *Gujarat* was entirely from the saline deposit of the sea and obtained by the evaporation method. The best salt produced at Jhinhvada.²⁰⁵ Salt found at Fatehbad –Chotgaon in *Bengal*.²⁰⁶ Salt obtained from evaporation at Manikapatan in *Orissa*.²⁰⁷ Brine –wells is only

199 Op., cit., Tavernier –II –p -455.

200 Op., cit., *Ain-II* Jarrett, p. 235.

201 Saqi Mustad Khan, *Maasir-i-Alamgiri*, English translation by Jadu Nath Sarkar, Calcutta, 1943. Per (MSS)

202 Khulasat Per MSS p. 26, 34, 36.

203 Op., cit., Moreland, Akbar-10 Aurangabad, pp. 293-4.

204 Op., cit., Mundy –II –p -241; Manucci –II –p -425.

205 Op., cit., *Ain –I* –p -496.

206 Ibid, pp -396 & 406.

207 Ibid, p-411.

the source of mineral salt in *Assam*. Salt was also found in Machhlipatan, in *South India* and Goa.²⁰⁸

SALTPETRE: Tavernier says that, Agra and Patna were the store-house of saltpetre." The refined saltpetre cost three times more than the unrefined. Hollanders set up a warehouse 14 leagues from Patna and after refining, it transported it to Hoogly. Its one maund cost seven Mahmudis.²⁰⁹ It may be noted that, saltpetre was obtained by washing the contaminated soil at the Coromandal coast, Gujarat, Agra, Bihar and Kankanken port.²¹⁰ Later on, Patna became a good centre of refine and unrefined saltpetre. Unrefined saltpetre cost was 8700 lbs. Avoir at 1170 Guildars and refined 4700 lbs. Avoir at 2964 Guildars Pelsaret describes the industry in detail. It prepared for three kinds of earth, Black, Yellow and White, and that prepared from the first is of the best quality being free from salt. In Shahjahan's times, saltpetre was required for the manufacture of gun-powder so its trade developed greatly at Sheragarh near Agra, Thatta, Patna and Ahmedabad. Its mines found at Thatta in *Sind*.²¹¹ In Ajmer, Pragana implied the manufacture of saltpetre in *Rajasthan*.²¹² Saltpetre was also found in *Gujarat*,²¹³ at Shergarh in *Uttar Pradesh*.²¹⁴ At Chapra in *Bihar*,²¹⁵ in *Bengal* near Malda, at Nizamapatan in *Deccan (East)* and in *South India* at Hubli.²¹⁶

SILVER: Silver mine was found in Lahore and the mines of Rupi silver existed in Kullu (*Punjab*), at Uncha in *Rajasthan*,²¹⁷ in *Uttar Pradesh* at Kumaun.²¹⁸ The remains of the old 'silver' mine still exist in Chandi Khadan. (*Central India*). In (*Bengal*) Bhutant, Small quantities also found from sand washing. Tavernier says

208 Op., cit., Careri – p -190.

209 Sarkar-*India of Aurangzeb*, LXXXVII.

210 Op., cit., Moreland *India from Akbar to Aurangzeb*, pp. 118-19.

211 Op., cit., *English Factory* 1634,36., p -130.; Hamilton –Pinkerton p -208.

212 Op., cit., *Ain –I*, p -451.

213 Op., cit., *English Factory* – 1624 -45, pp -164 -205., 1646 -50. pp -34,112,150.

214 Ibid, *English Factory* 1655 -60, pp -60 -66.

215 Op., cit., Tavernier –I, p -122.

216 Op., cit., *English Factory*, 1668 -69., p -113.

217 Op., cit., *Ain –I*, p -451

218 Ibid *Ain –I*, p -514.

silver was mined in the South part of *Assam*.²¹⁹ All over the world its 15% was used for the monetary purposes. This includes new production and demonetized silver. Its some part was held for monetary exchange but the largest amount was consumed in industrial purpose as such making of jewelry & ornaments. Examples are sterling and plated silverware, the photographic and chemical industries and electrolytic uses for pointed circuits. Silver is world's best electrical conductor.

LEAD & ZINC: Lead was found in the Rupi mines at Kullu, (*Punjab*). It was found in Sojnat, Jaitarar, at Jawar, in Rajasthan, in *Uttar Pradesh* at Kumaun,²²⁰ in *Assam* at Mirhmi Hills. Zinc was found at Jawar in *Rajasthan* and Punjab.

Lead & Zinc rank next to copper as essential nonferrous metals in modern industry. Normally the chief uses for storage batteries, ammunition, electrical cables, caulking leads, pipe solder and of red & white lead. Lead is used over other materials because of its demonstrated corrosion resistance over a wide range and also its useful to life. It has a high storage value.

Lead pigment is used in paints for protection from toxic affect and environment restrictions. It consumes 42% in batteries. Zinc is used in galvanizing, dye castings, alloyed with copper to form brass with, wire tubes and pipes. Zinc die castings are used for automobile carburetors, pumps, hub caps, drill and glass jar tops.

IRON: Iron Mines were found in Pargana, Khreuh in *Kashmir*, Sukhet in Distt. Mandi (*Punjab*),²²¹ and Nalpur in *Rajasthan*. Kutch iron was used for steel swords.²²² Fryer mentions that iron was also found in Surat (*Gujarat*).²²³ In *Uttar Pradesh*, iron found at Kumaun in Burhampur at (*Central India*),²²⁴ in *Bengal* at Khasi –Jaintia Hills,²²⁵ in *South India*²²⁶ Nuha- Mundi in Orissa and at Indoure in

219 Op., cit., Tavernier –II, p -281.

220 Op., cit., *Ain –I*, p -434.

221 R. Moorcroft and Trebeck, I, 174 -5; Walt, Dep, IV, 511.

222 R.C. Dutt, *Economic History of India Under Early British Rule*, New Delhi –1960., p -204.

223 Op., cit., Fryer –I, p -303.

224 Op., cit., Manucci –I, p-66.

225 Op., cit., *Ain –I*, p -391.

226 Hamilton Pinkertn, p -365.

the (Deccan East). Iron is the backbone of modern civilization. Few are aware to what extent we have become dependent upon it in homes, farms, cities, machines, automobiles, trains, ships, without it we should have to spin our clothes by hand and travel in wooden carts over dusty roads. There were four kinds of Iron. Wrought iron, Cast Iron, Meteoritic Steel, manufactured steel. Wrought iron is soft and malleable, and was considered 'Female'. Wrought iron was a significant component in the manufacture of steel. The property of this type of iron can be summarized from L Biruni's book on meteorology as follows: it was hard and whitish-silver in colour, though its powder sometimes gave a pinkish reflection. It was mixed in Crucibles with wrought iron to make steel. Meteoritic steel was also in vogue. Manufactured steel made from wrought iron bars by 'cementation' a process where iron bars were packed with charcoal and heated until they had absorbed enough carbon from it. However, steel was usually made in the molten state.²²⁷

COPPER: Copper mines were found in Northern Mountains in *Punjab*, Bairat in Singhana mines. It is also found in Dariba 5, 1/2 m S.W. of Raipur, Kot Putti (*Rajasthan*),²²⁸ *Orissa, Bihar and Kanataka*. In *Uttar Pradesh* Copper found at Kumaun.²²⁹

JADE: In *Kashmir*, Jade collected in the Khetan clist, grom beds of the Karakash River and Vurung Kash River. Bernier expressed that, Jade as a product of great Tibet. **CRYSTAL:** - According to Bernier crystal obtained from the mountain ranges of *Kashmir*. Marble like stone which they used for ornaments was found near Rajgir in Bihar.²³⁰

TOUCH -STONE: Presumably identical with Sang-I-Dalam used by goldsmiths and mined near Verineng in *Kashmir*.

BORON: According to Pelsaert, its mines situated near Mansarovar in *Kashmir*.

227 Ahmad Y. al -hassan Donald R. Hill, *Islamic technology an illustrated History*, London. 1986, p. 250 -53.

228 Op., cit., Manucci -II, p -432.

229 Op., cit., *Ain -I*, p -434.

230 Op., cit., *Ain -I* p -416.

GYPSUM: It was mined near Bhera in *Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat*.

ANTIMONY: Iron and yellow building stone are also found in *Sind* area.²³¹

LIME: Made from pebbles collected from the Tavi river at Jammu and reputed for its whiteness, quality & disability.

AGATE: Agate found near Kapadvanj in Mahar & Majhin.²³² Agate and Carnelian found within 4 Kos of Broach.²³³ The mines lay in forest, the miners lived at Neemoodra, 3, miles from Narbada, river,²³⁴ and also found in Golkunda.

CORUNDUM: Found in *The deccan (East)*.²³⁵

ARSENIC: The best quality orpiment is found in Kumaun (U.P.)

SULPHUR: Sulphur found in *Uttar Pradesh*.

BORAX: Pelsaert, express that, Borax was collected into Lake Mansarowar in *Uttar Pradesh & Kumaun*.

AMETHYST: Found at Golkunda (*The Deccan East*)

OTHER METALS: Ain refers to the mines of diamonds, gold, silver, copper, in the territories between Pegu and Arakan near Toda Bhim in Agra Province Mines of copper and Turquoise also existed. Copper lead, iron, gold, rubies and diamonds existed in the Province of Delhi besides orpiment and broax in the Kumayun hills.²³⁶ Thus we see that the Suba of Agra was rich in mineral wealth. Copper was mined at Agra, Sighpana, and Kotputli, Silver at Perath and Iron in Gwallior at Fatehpur, there was a quarrei of red stone for building purposes.²³⁷

Bernier found that Hindustani required copper eagerly.²³⁸ Tavernier refers to the existence of the mineral near Agra, where there were two mines,

231 Op., cit., *Ain -I*, p -556.

232 Op., cit., *The English Factories in India*, Oxford, 1954. 1618 -21, p -52.

233 Op., cit., Finch, *Early Travels*, p -174., Thevenot

234 M.S. Commissariat *A history of Gujarat*, I Bombay. 1957, p -262 -3 & 268 -70.

235 Op., cit., Thevenot, p -108.

236 Ibid., p. 285.

237 Op., cit., Pant, *Commercial Policy of the Mughals*, p. 91.

238 Op., cit., Bernier Travels, Pt. 1, p. 449.

exchanging copper for salt.²³⁹ Khulasat refers to silver, copper and iron mines were in vogue in India.²⁴⁰ Copper was also mined in Ajmer, Kumayun, Bengal, Oudh and Delhi provinces, but the details of their quality and quantity are not available. Iron existed in the provinces of Shahjehanabad, Allahabad, Kabul, Golconda and Bengal.²⁴¹ Bronze was obtained in Kabul and exported to India.²⁴² Lead was found in Allahabad province. Various types of building stone mines like red stones, Sang-I-Yalsi were mined in Fatehpur Sikri, marble in Patna, yellow stone in Thatta and Sang-I Suleman in Kashmir near village Dhaka.

Copper mine in Sojhat find mention in 17th century document. Vigat also mentions a tax levied on copper in Pargana of Sajhat. Rupees 52 in 1661 and Rs. 55 in 1662 are said to have been realized as tax.²⁴³

QUARRIES: The rocky terrain of Marwar provided two quarries of building stone in the villages of Phalodi. Stone was carried away on carts and the tax being one *taka* per cart. The Fidurar quarries situated near Jodhpur are the largest in the region, which produce a very good quality of sandstone.²⁴⁴ Tax on marble is also mentioned.

RURAL CLASSES: Mohammad Habib assessed the economic changes during the Delhi Sultanate. He believed that the new regime was qualitatively different from the one it had supplemented and that it released social forces which created an economic organization considerably superior to the one that had existed before. He suggested that there was an expansion of the towns and an important alteration in agrarian relationship. Mohammad Habib felt that the

239 Op., cit., Tavernier Travels, p. 3.

240 Op., cit., Khulasat, (Per MSS) p. 7.

241 Abdul Quadir Badauni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, VoU to III translated by S.A.Ranking, W.H.Lowe and T.Wolsley Haig, Delhi, 1973. (Reprint). (Per. Text.), p. 1027.

242 Op., cit., (Khulasat) Delhi, p. 22.

243 Vigat-1, p. 398.

244 B. L. Bhadani, *Peasants Artisans and Entrepreneurs*, Rawat Publications, New Delhi, 1999, p. 105.

changes were so fundamental as to deserve the designation of 'urban' and 'rural' revolutions.²⁴⁵

PROFESSIONAL RURAL GROUP: R.K. Mukherjee in his account and Bengali Poet Mukundaram composed his epic name Burdwan, described about Economic hierarchy, the following classes were mentioned:

The higher class Brahman was learned person and taught their tools.

The lower class Brahmans served as priest in temples and depends upon contributions given by the villagers, milk from the cowherd, and oil from the oil-presser, sweetmeat from the confectioner and daily needs articles from the general population.

The village astrologers or minstrels who also subsisted on offerings obtained homage from house to house.

The professional class represented chiefly by physicians and the writer belongs to (Kayasthas). The Kayasthas proved their learning due to their professional skill. They led good position in society because they should have the best land and rent free houses. Physician covered their palm leaf books with clothes and took under their arms.

The Vaisays were good traders, a happy set of men always buying and selling. Some tilled land, tended cows and were carriers. Some of them went to distant land by river and by sea, their boats going out with local produce to the island of ceylon and returned with cargoes and luxury articles, such as sandalwood, conch, shells, pashthu shawls and Tibetan fly-whisks.

The agriculturist caste represented by the Hakel Gopes and the Baruis. Later they cultivated betel.

The artisan case represented by goldsmiths, blacksmiths braziers, potters, carpenters, dyers, oil-men, confectioners spice dealers, conch-shell,

245 Mohammad Habib, *Introduction to a new edition of Elliot and Dowson's History of India as told by its own Historians*, vol. II, Aligarh Cosmopolitan, 1952, 37-82.

bangle-maker, cotton-weavers and silk-weavers. The last of these were encouraged by the assignment of rent-free land.

The doms, hunters, fishermen, date-palm-tappers and watchmen were come under low caste.

The kols, korenas and maharattas came under depressed class and lived in the suburbs. The Mahratta's occupations were to tap for the care of diseased spleens, and to operate for cataract.

S.P.Sangar, expressed in his article "Professions and Occupations in Later Medieval Northern India", that those landless and jobless people who were settled in rural area and near jungle, indulged in some professions and occupations for their livelihood. The list of these professions and occupations is given below:

MINSTRELS – DANCING MINSTRELS: Dancing minstrels were known as Nats and Bazigars and formed a separate class. Poet Varinda says that they could easily walk over a string hanging between the poles. Sur Das refers to *NAT AND NATNI*. The woman who made a monkey, with a stick in its hands, was *NATM*. He compares *MAYA* to *NATNI*. Many dance at other places performed by *NAT* or Bazigar class. Natni. Tosh speaks of a *NAT* with a *thal* or big platter in his hands. Tulsi Das writes about dancing minstrels who had to dance in accordance with the tune, known as Bazigar. He also refers to *Bhand* or *Vidhushak* who was an expert dancer.

The French traveler, Tavernier, witnessed in Broach in 1641 the famous mango trick by some Indian Jugglers in the English factory there. Tavernier remarks that these jugglers travelled from place to place along with wives and children like those in Europe whom they called the Egyptians and Bohemians.²⁴⁶

Terry and Thevnot have also mentioned the feats of tumblers²⁴⁷.

²⁴⁶ Op., cit., Tavernier, op. cit., 1 pp. 67-68.

²⁴⁷ Terry, Edward, *A voyage of the East Indies*, London, 1777, p. 97. Tavernier Part 111, pp.78-79.

OTHER PROFESSIONS

A Tailor – In Hindi *Darzi* and his wife is called *Darzin*.

Rangrez – A dyer – of clothes was termed as *Rangrez*.

A Washerman – was called *Dhobi* or *Rajak*. *Jayasi* refers to washermen.

Oil Man – The term for oil man in Hindi is *Teli*.

Gandhi – Perfumer for oilman, who made and sold different essences and scented oils. In Persian language he was termed as *Khushbu-I-Saz* or *Khushbu-I-Dar*, one who made fragrant perfumes or essences. In the Jaipur Newsletters there are references to one Mohammad Amin, *Khushbu-I-Saz* who was created a *Mansabdar*, by Aurangzeb. In this connection it may be noted that the rose essence was invented by *Nur-Jahan's* mother who named it as *Itr-I-Jahangiri* and presented it to the emperor on the *Nauroz Day*. It was incomparable in fragrance at cost eighty rupees per-tola.

Cow Herd – were *Gujars* or *Gawalas* and a *Gujreti* was a girl of the Gujar caste. Cow herds were also known as *Ahirs*.

Kachhis – were the fruit and vegetable sellers and their women folk were known as *Kachhins*, selling the above articles.

Bari – was a class whose members used to make and sell plates of leaves *Donas* or *Pattals* -refers to this class *Tour* and *Jaysi*.

Julahas – were weavers.

Tamoli or *Tamboli* – was the seller of betel leaf. His wife was *Tambolini* or *Chilini*, woman who prepared the betel leaf and offered it to the customers was termed as *Khwasin*.

Kalarin – was woman who sold wine. *Kalal* was male wine seller.

Manihar – was the maker and seller of *Churis* or glass bangles.

Bharai or Sutar – was a carpenter.

Lohar – Blacksmith.

Solan or Goldsmith - Tulsidas refers to the beating of gold by which process shine was added to the metal.

Kumbhakars, Kumhar, Kulal – were the vaisabil, terms used for the potter. His kiln was known as *Awa*. *Sudras* speaks of the baking of *kacha* earthen pots by the Kulal. Potter's wheel was known as *Chak*. *Patna and Ahmedabad* were famous for making good pottery in the 17th century.²⁴⁸

Dhaya was a nurse, a foster-mother.

Mali- was a gardener and his wife was *malin*. They would prepare *torna* or *bhandwar*, meaning arched gateways and garlands of flowers.

Vaidya or *Baid*- was the physician who would always feel the pulse of the patient and for the incurable or fatal malady of cough suggests the use of curd.

Mahaut -was the elephant-driver.

Sarathi -was the charioteer.

Kewat or *navak*- was the boatman. Other names for him were *khewat*, *dhiwa*, *karnadhara* and *mallah*. *Utrai* was the toll paid to the boatman for crossing the river in his boat. The words for the boat were *nauka* and *nao*.

Chitrakara -was the painter. Percy Brown's masterpiece on Mughal paintings is quite famous to their *chitrakari*. Thevenot remarked that the Delhi painters did not get any encouragement either from the government or from the affluent persons and cared to do as much work as they can for present money to subsist on.²⁴⁹

Kathaks- were story-tellers.

248 Op., cit., Manucci –II, p -425 -28.

249 Op., cit., Thevenot, op. cit., p -65.

Dhadhis -were Muslim minstrels and begged money by playing on the instrument known as *Dadhi* or *Hukak*. The female was called as *dhadhini*. They usually sang on the occasions of child births. Those who begged by dancing were called as *jagas*.

Bhikharis -were beggars.

Pardhi or *Vyaddha*- was a huntsman.

Nishad or *Bhil*- was the poorest member of the society and lived on hunting or theft.

Qasais -were butchers.

Rahim- refers to grass cutters.

Batmars- were highway robbers. Among other disreputable persons were *Uchaka*, *Ganthakara*-, *Chor* or thief, *thag*, *batpari* and *latubansi*.²⁵⁰

Kahar - Has been water carrier performing a very useful service in the Indian society. The kahars also carried load even to distant and far off places. They used *bahengies* as explained by Peter Mundy.²⁵¹

The *Ain* gives a long list of wages paid to artisans engaged in different crafts and vocations in Akbar's time. The wages were paid according to standard of skill of the laborers and artisans as given below: *Dam* is from the twentieth part of a rupee or $\frac{7}{40}$ th of a rupee.

- I *Cilkars*: (Workers in lime): First class 7 dams, second 6 and third 5 dams.
- II *Sangtarash* (Stone Masons): The tracer got 6 dams, one who did plain work got 5 dams but a labourer employed in quarries got 22 jitals for breaking one maund.

250 S.P Sangar, *People Professions and Occupations in Later Medieval Northern India: The Panjab Past and Present*, Vol. -XX., April, 1986, p -49 -68.

251 Op., cit., Mundy, -II, p -115.

III *Carpenters*: First class 7 dams, second class 6 dams, third 4 dams, fourth 3 dams, and fifth 2 d for each pain job. A first class carpenter got 1 d M jitals for one gaz second class 1 d 6 jitals Third class 21 jitals.

IV *Pinjrarsaz* (A Lattice-worker): First when the pieces are joined (fastened with strings) and the interstices to be dodecagona; 24 dams for every square gaz. Hexagonal 18 dams, jattri (Rhombas-like) 16 dams, shatranji as chessboard 12 dam; for every square gaz.

Arrakash: (One who saws beams) for job work per square gaz 2½ dams if sisau if naghu wood; 2 dam. A labourer employed for the day, 2 dams. There were three men for every saw, one above two below.

Beldars: (Brick-layers): First class daily 3½ dams; second class 3 dams; per gaz. If employed by the job for the fortress walls, with the settlements 4 dams for gaz; laying foundations 2½ dams; for all other walls 2 dams, fore digging ditches ½ dam per gaz. The gaz of labourer contains 32 Tassuj.

Chahkan (well diggers): First class 2 dams per gaz; second class 1½ dam and third class 1¼ dam per gaz.

Ghotakhor. (Divers) – They cleaned wells in the cold season 4 dams per diem; in the hot season 3 d. and 2 D for cleaning a depth of one gaz.

Khisht-Tarash (Tile Makers): For 100 moulds smoothened 8 dams.

Surkhi-Kab: (Pounders of old bricks): 1½ dam for a heap of 8 mans.

Glass-cutters: 100 dams per gaz.

Chappar-band (Thatchers): 3 dams per diem; If done by the job 2nd 100 gaz.

Bomboo Cutters: 2 dams per diem.

Patal-Band: 1 dam per 4 gaz.

Lakhira: They varnished reeds etc. with lac 2 dams per diem.

Abkash (Water carriers): 2 to 3 dams per diem.²⁵² As are used for furnishing house builders with water for mortar and quicklime, get 2.d. per diem

The thirty -six of the Sudra castes of Janpur mentioned in the autobiographical *Ardhakathanaka*, the more extensive list of sixty –six in Abdur Rahim Khan –Khanan’s *Nagara –sobha* and Pelsaert’s reference to a hundred crafts cover artisans and service occupations whose clientele evidently included the middle classes. The lists cover a wide and varied range of occupations – Weaver, tailor, barber, metalworker, carpenter, mason, glassblower, stone cutter, oil –presser, sweetmeat seller, palanquin –bearer, painter, carpet maker, paper manufacturer, Thatcher, lace -worker, fireworks –maker, sword sharpener, seller of torches, and leaves used as platters etc.²⁵³

Nevertheless, the picture of peasant life in Mughal India is not one of acute discontent, except in some areas at different periods. For the bulk of the writers of the period in the various regional languages, the village represented an established way of life in which both joys and sorrows were to be borne with equanimity.

252 Op., cit., Abul -Fazl, *Ain –I*, Tr. Bloch. P -325, 236.

253 Tapan Ray Chaudhuri and Irfan Habib, *The Cambridge Economic History of India 1200 - 1750*, Vol. I. Cambridge University Press. 3rd edition. 1993. p. 264.

CHAPTER – 4

MEANS OF TRAVELLING AND COMMUNICATION

Travel, particularly, over the long distance was a hazardous task and was performed with utmost caution, observed a foreign traveller. It was safe and easy for those who had requisite means or resources either private or those of the state. It was, certainly, dangerous for those who had a little or no means. Travel was performed either by land or water. India was connected by a network of roads from early times because it was necessary to layout vast roads in all directions, linking up the various parts of an empire, both strategically and commercially. It was perceived that communications were the very arteries of a great empire, which would send its pulsations to all the parts through them.

Besides human endeavors, geography also played a vital role in determining roads and ranks of a country, but their proper development is entirely human development. India is blessed with a variety of physical features like vast alluvial plains, dense forests, long stretches of desert, deep rivers, mountain chains and rock plateaus, etc, which have strongly influenced the pattern of society of India and the nature of its political and administrative divisions.¹

Roads have remained the *life line* to the generation – inhabited in any country of the world, because these are the very symbols of overall development in the field of transportation, communication and administration. The preparation of roads connecting villages and towns is referred to in the Rig-Veda. These roads were well guarded against possible attacks of the thieves and wild beasts and also provided smooth travelling.²

Although *Romans* have been famous for construction of roads in their whole empire, but even in the early Vedic period there existed a regular road

1 Goblet, Y. M., Political Geography and The World Map. London. 1995., p-121.

2 Rigveda; I :116.3, 12.5.

system with *Rest houses*. *Jatakas* mentions that in India voyages of several travellers also took place. These roads consisted of overland caravan routes across deserts going westwards to the port of *Broach* and northwards to Qandhar and Central Asia. The *jataka* of *Anath Pindakas* mentions caravans travelling in south east from *Saravsathi* to *Rajgraha* and back covering about 300 miles towards *Qandhar*. A great trade route connected India with central Asia and western Asia by way of *Taxila* in the Punjab laid travels in the North.

During the time of the *Mauryan* Empire, overland trade between India and western Asia than the *Hellenic* world developed through the cities of the Northwest, primarily *Taxila*. Taxila was well connected with other parts of the Mauryan Empire through roads. The Mauryan had built a highway from *Taxila* to *Pataliputra*³ also. During the Sultan period the roads were in deplorable condition but the Sultans like Balban, Mohammad Tughlaq and Feroze Tughlaq, by their energetic efforts, improved the 'road system' considerably as the caravans consisting of merchandize and traders could move freely was corroborated by the travelers and a historian Zia-ud-din Barni. Mohammad Bin Tughlaq ordered the trees to be planted on both sides of the roads from Delhi to Daultabad.⁴

Eulogizing the benefits of *Sher Shah's* reign which was, in fact, the pioneering attempt of this kind in whole of the Muslim period, *Father Francois Catron* adds, "Had no other advantage accrued to India from the usurpation of Sher Shah this alone merit confession of its usefulness. He did more than really furnish a place of cover for persons travelling."⁵ The most important feature of Sher Shah's successful administration system was building of important roads which were well-connected with the capital Agra and ran in different directions".⁶ The road was, initially, built by Sher Shah to connect Agra, his capital, through his hometown. It was soon extended westward to *Multan* and eastward to *Sonargan* in Bengal.

3 Strabo, *Geography*. (tr.) H. L. Jones, Vol. VII. London. 1930, p. 17.

4 Barani, *Tarikh-Ferozasahi*, p 105.

5 Father Francis Catran, *Mughal Dynasty in India*, 1826, p.

6 Pramod Sangar, *Growth of the English Trade Under the Mughals*, p. 207.

A major road running across Gangetic Plain was also built by *Sher Shah*. His intention was to link together the remote provinces of his vast empire for administrative and military reasons. The *Sadak-E--Azam* ("Royal Road") was then known, universally the *GRANT TRANK ROAD*.⁷ Building of important roads was a visible symbol of his administrative genius and imperial unity. The longest and the best known road among them ran from Sonargaon to *Indus*, which was 1500 kos in length.⁸ He built another road from Agra to Burhanpur, and a third he made from Agra to *Jodhpur* and *Chittor*. The fourth road ran from *Lahore* to *Multan*.

The roads were well planned and well connected with all the strategic frontier cities. For the comfort and convenience of travellers, shady trees were planted on both sides of the road and *Sarais* (inns) were constructed at every two kos.⁹ These sarais were vertible arteries of the Empire. There were different apartments for the Hindus and the Muslims in every sarai, and provision for water, bed, food and fodder for men, their horses and many types of other facilities intended to satisfy the wayfarers like material and moral needs. In every sarai, two horses were kept so that news from a great distance could reach him in a day's time. These sarais served as halting stations for state officials and for the King himself, for whom a special room was reserved.¹⁰

Travelling and means of communication form an integral part of administrative as well as commercial activity. Fortunately, the presence of the foreign traders and the other trading and political activities led the rulers to believe that the laying of good roads remained on the agenda of the Mughal government as an important item. In Medieval India, the process began with the rise of the second Afghan Empire, under Sher Shah Suri.

It is well known maxim that the presence of good roads can always play a vital role in covering the required destination, further giving boost to transportation and in stimulating trade which were all helpful for the influence

7 Wikipedia.

8 Kalikarangan Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, p. 338.

9 Elliot and Dowson, *History of India*, vol. IV, p. 417.

10 Kalikarangan Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, p p. 391-92

and glory of the empire were, however, neglected by the Mughals in the early phase.

ROLE OF THE MUGHAL EMPERORS: Under Babur, relay stations were constructed between Agra and Kabul,¹¹ but Akbar was the first to have lined the routes with *kos-minar*. It is almost certain that the milestones along the imperial highway from Agra to Ajmer were erected during his reign. Finch, Withington and Mundy make explicit statements to this effect.¹² Jahangir would have pursued his work in the direction of Lahore. He states in his memoirs¹³ that he gave the order to install these pillars (*mil*) during the fourteenth year of his reign, i.e. annal 1619. It is true that neither Finch, in 1610, nor Coryat, who in 1615 had admired the magnificent tree-lined avenue, make mention of them.¹⁴ It is possible that Sahjahan had completed the work. In any case, when Bernier journeyed to Delhi in the mid 17th century, the small pyramids had all been installed.¹⁵ Manucci remarks that, the markers on the Allahabad road were installed by Jahangir.¹⁶

The Mughal Emperors were not less enthusiastic in implementing public works because they felt it really benefited to their subjects. They adorned the land with numerable wells, tanks, reservoirs, bridges, canals, gardens, step wells, dams, ferries, bathing-ghats, baths, sarais, halting places, public kitchens, roads, hospitals, schools, temples and mosques etc. Here, I would confine myself to the description, the working and the construction of the roads.

Then industrial organization creates great cities, raises the standard of living, promotes culture and unites politically.¹⁷ Tavernier's account regarding

11 In His memoirs (Babur-Nama, Vol. II, 629)

12 Finch. W., observation of William Finch, Merchant; Purchas. Vol. IV Glasco 1905.p. 149. Withington, p. 225; Mundy Travels, Vol.II, p. 226.

13 Tuzuk, Vol.II, 100.

14 Some of the milestones on the road from Agra to Mathura resemble very much those on the Ajmer road, others are more slender and terminate with a small pyramidal ornamentation.

15 Franscios Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire*, translated & edited by Archibald Constable, 1656-68, Delhi. 1972. Reprint. p.284;

16 Manucci Vol. I, p. 124. Here Manucci writes that Jahangir was reputed to have installed some manner of pyramids from Multan to Allahabad .

17 S. S. Kulshrestha, *the Development of trade and Indus under the Mughals*, p. 148.

Indian travelling is that, trade routes introduced the European trading community to the immanence of commercial potentialities of this country. During his six visits to India, he adopted different routes to seek entry into the country. This was probably done in order to acquaint himself personally and collect first hand information of various trade routes like; from (I) Ispahan to Agra (II) Agra to Hormuz, (III) Hormuz to Surat.

The trade routes in India of the 17th and 18th centuries have been aligned largely on the basis of the routes used by *Tavernier, Bernier, Fitch, Peter Mundy, Manrique and John Marshall*. For the overland route from Masulipatam to Surat, Van –Ravanstein's itinerary has been followed. The Flemish Geographer, De Laet's *Description of India and Fragment of Indian History*, contain an account of the principal roads and towns of India, which has been helpful. De Laet himself was a careful compiler, and accurately used the writings of many foreign travellers and authors.

"Towards the western region, land route most frequently used by the merchants. The Patna-Agra route ran through Sasaram-Benaras-Allahabad-and Firozabad.¹⁸ From Agra, Surat and Lahore were well connected by land routes. The route from Delhi to Patna, as traced by Marshall, was also via Agra. But the Patna-Delhi route intensioned in the later sources was Delhi-Hapur-Moradabad-Rai Bariely-Banaras-Buxar- Agra and Patna. For the eastern region the important route was Balasore , via Monghyr-Rajmahal-Kasimbazar and Hugli. Patna was linked with Nepal via Hajipur, Mehshi, Mothihara, Hitoura, while Nepal was linked through hilly routes with Tibet; Bhutan and Lhasa etc. Merchants from Kashmir to Bhutan also passed via Patna."¹⁹ The *Chahar Gulshan*, edited by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, has also given a description of the various important roads and trade routes and their stages.

The overland trade routes in Asia have been based on the journeys of *Newberry, Fitch and Midenhall*, among others. The old Silk –routes from China

18 B. K. Sarkar, *Indian Transport and Communication in Medieval India*, Calcutta, 1925, p. 35.

19 *John Marshall in India 1668-72*, ed. S. A. Khan, London, 1927, p. 169.

were later on followed, are aligned on the basis of E.H. Warmington's Map. William Rubruck's and Marco polo's routes as well as those indicated in De Laet's *Description of India* have been used. Foster's *England's Quest of Eastern Trade* and maps therein, giving the routes noticed by the European travellers, have also been utilized.

Tavernier mentioned that, in Surat and Golkunda, a cart with two oxen could be hired for about a rupee per day.

Table 4.1

**Popular Trade Routes 1640-1667 (based on Tavernier)
Route from Surat to Agra via Burhanpur and Sironj**

Sr. No.	From	To	Via	Distance	Time taken
1.	Agra & Dacca	Patna	Not recorded	Not recorded	Not recorded
2.	Aurangabad	Surat	" "	" "	12 days
3.	Bijapur	Golconda	" "	100 kos	9 days
4.	Delhi	Agra	" "	n. r.	n. r.
5.	Gandikota	Golconda	" "	" "	" "
6.	Goa	Masulipatam	Cochin	" "	" "
7.	"	Bijapur	n. r.	" "	8 days
8.	"	Golconda	Bijapur	85 kos	n. r.
9.	Golconda	Aurangabad	n. r.	n. r.	16 -25 Days
10.	"	Masulipatam	" "	100 kos	8 Days
11.	"	"	Gani (Diamond mines)	112 kos	n. r.
12.	Isphan	Agra	Qandhar & Kabul	n. r.	" "
13.	"	"	Qandhar & Multan	" "	Short by ten days than the other route

Sr. No.	From	To	Via	Distance	Time taken
14.	Lahore	Agra	n. r.	n. r.	21 days
15.	"	Multan	" "	" "	10 days
16.	Masulipatam	Gandikota	" "	" "	n. r.
17.	Sironj	Agra	" "	106 kos	" "
18.	Surat	"	Ahemdabad	415 kos	" "
19.	"	"	Burhanpur & ironj	339 kos	" "
20.	"	Goa	n. r.	61 kos	" "
21.	"	Golconda	" "	324 kos	27 -40 days

KOS WAS APPROXIMATLY = 4.827 KM.

KOS " = 19.38 km.

League " = 4.827 km.²⁰

Distance from Agra to Surat

Mundy started from Agra on a tedious journey on 25th February, 1633 and reached on 25th may, 1633 after traveling 414 kos. "From Agra to Sidhpur 284 great kos amounting to 426 English miles. From Sidhpur to Surat, 130 small kos, 172 miles 414 kos = 598 ¼ miles".²¹

ROAD BUILDING ACTIVITY: The Means of Travelling and communications were most significant aspects of Mughal India. Under the Mughals, road building activities were planned and supervised by a public works department. During imperial tour or campaign thousands of laborers, sappers, wood and stone cutters were employed to clear the road obstacles to make them fit for travel. Monserrate in his commentary on the Kabul march, reported many new ventures

20 *Tavernier's Travels in India* Chapter IV pp. 44 to 65. Tavernier Travels in India opinion cited by Meera Nanda, *European Travel Accounts During the Reigns of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb*, Kurukshetra, 1994, pp -68-69.

21 Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia 1608-67*, Edited by Richard Carnac Temple and L.M. Anstey, Cambridge, 1907-36. Vol.II, p -274.

and observations, “nothing for instance, that Muhammed Yasin Khan Mir Bati’ who was in -charge of roads and bridges, efficiently removed any type of obstructions on the roads levelling it, as far as possible, to facilitate during the movement on this campaign as the army had to cross many unbridged rivers. Wooden and boat bridges were widely constructed and the army, with elephants, camels, horses, baggage and artillery, crossed safely”.²²

New roads construction and old roads repair and improvement came under; the department of the road was called the *DIWAN –I –BAYUTAT*. Whenever the emperor started on a journey, campaign or hunt, hundreds of sappers and labourers would be sent in advance by the department to repair and improve the roads. If the going were rough due to rocks and stones or deep torrent beds they would, with considerable efficiency, clear the obstructions, making the way fit for the royal progress. A fixed number of Dakhil troops were handed over to the Mansabdars, but they were paid by the state. They were called half troopers. Match –lock bearers, carpenters, workers in –iron, water–carriers, and pioneers belonged to this class. From several accounts, it appears that there was no dearth of labourers. Zamindars had to recruit a number of labourers and other workers to maintain the roads and to deal with any emergency in their areas. Their methods of recruitment were not always pleasant. According to Pelsaert, if a zamindar or any powerful officer “Wanted a workmen, the man was not asked if he was willing to come, but was seized in the house or in the street, well beaten if, he would dare to raise any objection and, in the evening, paid half his wages, or nothing at all.”²³ Important and busy highways and roads may have been well maintained but lesser routes and roads were repaired and looked after only before the emperor used them. Mughal road builders and technicians did their best to overcome physical obstructions. Some idea of road building activity and technique may be formed from descriptions of the tours of Mughal emperors in different parts of the country.

22 Monserrate, p -81.

23 Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India (Tr. Moreland and Geyl.)*Cambridge,1925, p - 60.

Ain refers to several inventions of Akbar in wheeled carriages. He invented a large cart drawn by one elephant. It was large enough to hold several bathrooms and thus it served as a travelling bathroom. Camels and horses were also used for pulling carriages. Akbar also invented "Bahals" which could be accommodating several persons.²⁴ It is not known whether a systematic survey was made before or during imperial tours or campaigns were utilized by the public works departments on such occasions. On the basis of relevant sources we have seen that thousands of labourers, sappers, wood and stone -cutters and pioneers were employed to clear the roads of obstacles to make them fit for travel, but no other information about Mughal technique is available. They knew about explosives, using them effectively in many sieges and campaigns.²⁵ During Akbar's Chittor campaign in 1573 he ordered the mining of the road connected with Chittor as the Mughals were adept in the art of using explosive. In ranking covered areas, wood -cutters cleared the line of roads, while sappers and stone cutters cleared stony ground. Probably some sort of rammer was used to level off the surface. Road building and construction were, generally, carried out during the winter or early summer. The absence of all weather roads made such work difficult during the dry season as unexpected rain could bring enormous problems and difficulties.

The roads of the Mughal Empire were imperfectly levelled and unmetalled, and provided here and there with a causeway over the small ravines and streams and, generally, with a ferry wherever the route crossed over the larger rivers. In a letter to the company in 1666 A.D., the council remarked that, "here are no beaten roads or mending of highway, but the first cart that travel must cut them a new, with their wheels, that makes it very tedious and troublesome traveling in the first of the year."²⁶

According to John Fryer; the roads were fit for travel only in the dry season, Caravans were rarely organized during the monsoon; they invariably

24 Abul Fazl, *Ain-I-Akbari*, You, translated by H.Blochmann, Delhi 1964 (Reprint). p -285.

25 *Ain-II*, pp - 46 - 67.

26 Foster , *English Factories in India*, 1665 -67, p -570.

made their journeys during summer or winter. This does not mean that people did not travel at all during the monsoon. In fact, they travelled during all seasons; the important change being in the number of travellers. During the monsoon, absolute necessity brought people out of their homes and villages.²⁷

Peter Mundy's experiences during his journey from Agra to Patna during the monsoon were exasperating. He started with only eight carts, and the going was, sometimes, so difficult that his party could hardly make well six or seven miles per day. The journey to Patna took 44 days²⁸ "by reason of mire and dirt" it being time of Rains,²⁹ but December was the best month for travel. Along the way he saw not even one laden cart travelling in either direction. Tavernier, on the other hand, leaving Agra on the 25th November, reached Patna on the 21st December, 1655; a journey of 27 days, two of which were spent in Banaras.³⁰

Moreland says that, the routes in Northern India were in some cases at least suitable for wheeled traffic and long lines of carts might occasionally be seen, but from Golconda Southwards to Cape Camorin, carts were practically unknown and pack animals or porters were the only means of transport by land.³¹

MEASUREMENT: In 1575 Akbar introduced measurement by bamboos joined with rings, which became standard throughout the empire; whenever anybody travelled anywhere the distance was carefully recorded by this method. Later the calculations were audited by inspectors.³² Akbar retained the land survey technique of Sher Shah, with slight alterations. Measurement by means of rope had been the rule, but reading could vary, depending on whether the rope was wet or dry.³³ He also standardized his kos to be of 5,000 yards. Whenever

27 John Fryer's, *Travel in East India and Persia -II*, Second Series No. XX, London. 1967, p - 85.

28 Op., cit., Mundy - II, pp -143 - 44.

29 Ibid, p - 144.

30 Jean Baptiste Tavernier *Travels in India*, 2 Vols. English translations by V. Ball, London, 1889. pp -113 -121.

31 Moreland, W.H. *India at the Death of Akbar*, London, 1927, pp .6 -7.

32 *Ain -II*, (Tr.) Jarrett., p -417.

33 Manucci, *Storia Do Mogor*. II, London, 1906 -08., p -70.

his majesty travels, "writes Abul Fazl, "The distances are recorded in full measurement audited by the superintendent."³⁴ Father Monserate, who in 1581 accompanied Akbar's expedition against Mirza Hakim, has reported on the method; the distance travelled everyday was measured with a ten foot rod by Akbar's surveyor, who followed the emperor closely measuring the distance from the moment he left his pavilion.

KOS –MINARS: Megasthenes mentions that the demarcation of roadways is not a Mughal innovation, having already existed under the Maurya.³⁵ Ibn Batutta also noted the milestones between Delhi and Dhar:

There is between the two places a travelling distance of twenty-four days. Along the road separating them are found columns upon which is engraved the number of miles lying between two such pillars. Should the travellers wish to know how much way he has achieved during his days and what distance yet remains for him to reach the station or town towards which he is proceeding, he reads the inscription on the pillar and learns what he wanted to know.³⁶ Tavernier relates that small stones were placed at every 500 paces along the roads throughout the 17th century India, which the nearby villagers were to whiten from time to time, so that couriers might distinguish the way in nights of darkness and rain.³⁷

Akbar is said to have erected a Kos Minar at every kos (two miles) between Agra to Ajmer so that travellers might not lose their way. Jahangir wanted to introduce them throughout the length and breadth of the empire. In 1619, he ordered their erection at intervals of two miles of the route from Agra to Bengal. His order was carried out most diligently between Agra and Delhi alone, the traveller Thevenot saw seventy-nine minars; as well as sarais and wells.³⁸ Bernier also saw them during Aurangzeb's rule.³⁹ In some big cities there

34 *Op., cit., Ain -II*, Jarrett, p -417.

35 Megasthenes *Strabo Geography*. XV, 1, 50).

36 *Voyages* (Trans. Defremery.), t. IV, pp. 42-43.

37 *Op., cit.*, Tavernier, *Travels*, Vol. I, p. 233.

38 Sen. S.N. *op. cit.*, p -46.

39 *Op., cit.*, Bernier, p. 284

were signposts indicating the direction of different parts of the country.⁴⁰ Few of them still existed, and are well preserved.

BRIDGES: The Mughals, fully realizing the value of bridges to their road network, encouraged their construction and built various types of bridges. Some were strong and permanent, and built with beautifully decorated stones, while temporary bridges were made of wood, rope, and most often, boats.

BOAT BRIDGES: Mughal Engineers were skilled in making pontoon bridges. Akbar, in March 1566, while returning to Agra from Jaunpur, ordered his officer to bridge the river with boats; within a day they had done so.⁴¹ Boat bridges did not, usually, take long to build. A reasonably strong bridge could be ready in one to four days. During a campaign, or an imperial tour, the zamindars and, sometimes, other local officers supplied boats to the Mir Bah'r, who with their assistance took charge of the planning, and construction of boat bridges. But these were not always easily built. Sometimes the Engineers encountered great difficulties when they had to bridge turbulent water. Nonetheless, boat bridges were favoured because of their economy and convenience.

PERMANENT BRIDGES: The construction of permanent bridges was also popular. Monserrate, during his journey with Akbar to Kabul, saw first stone bridge near Karnal in the Punjab.⁴² On the same march, Akbar observed the building of a bridge over the Indus and Kabul rivers.⁴³ Another strong bridge, which cost Rs.20, 000 was built for Akbar under the supervision of Abul Fazl, at Sultanpur in the Punjab.

TANKS AND WELLS: Country like India, where journeys were undertaken mainly during the dry season, travel was only feasible on those routes along which, at regular intervals, an abundance of water was to be found, enabling the wayfarer to slake his thirst, refresh himself, bath, cook and water the animals.

40 Herbart Thomas, *Travels into Africa and Asia The Great*, London, 1677, p -36.

41 *Op., cit., Ain –II*, p -399.

42 *Op., cit.*, Monserrate, p -98.

43 *Op., cit., Ain –III*, p -523.

For which reason, the Indian roads were punctuated with reservoirs and wells. Since time immemorial, the wealthy of the land and princes have dug reservoirs and sunk wells along the roads.⁴⁴ Practically, everywhere in India, water was stored in vast reservoir (Talab) or Tank.⁴⁵ These works were considered to be of a charitable nature. The emperor Jahangir wrote in his memoirs (Tuzuk) that he had wells dug at every three kos on the route from Agra to Lahore.⁴⁶ Bernier mentions in his description of the road linking Agra with Delhi and specifies that they provided drinking water to travellers as well as serving to water the trees along the famous avenue.⁴⁷ These wells were important to the villagers economically, socially and religiously. These wells existed not only concomitantly to the rest-houses, but were also to be found along the roads.⁴⁸

RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS: The innumerable cult precincts bordering the roads availed to the satisfaction of the wayfarers' spiritual needs. To begin with, the road stations at which the travellers halted each evening were foreseen with shrines: mosques in the Imperial sarai, temples in the Hindu rest-houses, and niches, etc. sheltering the gods who corresponded to the diverse local cults; they still abound throughout countryside. Bartolomeo states that there was also a stone image of Ganesha in the main room of the rest-houses, and that on the main roads, in place of mile-stones, one found everywhere statue of this God to guide strangers.⁴⁹

SAFETY OF ROADS

Transport and means of communication form an integral part of commercial activity. Fortunately for the foreign traders, the contemporary Indian rulers had already contributed to the building of roads and routes for official administration and control of the various parts of their empires. In medieval India,

44 *Op. cit.*, Thevenot Travels p.81.

45 Hobson-Jobson p.898-9.

46 *Op. cit.*, Tuzuk, Vol.,II p., 100.

47 *Op. cit.*, Bernier Travels, p. 284.

48 Jean Deloche Trans. From French by James walker, *Transport and communication in India Prior to Steam Locomotion Vol.,I Land Transport*. New York 1993. p. 185.

49 Bartolomeo, Voyages,pp.69-70.

the process began with the rise of the second Afghan Empire. Government had also taken some steps for the safety and security of roads as under:-

It is mentioned in Ain that the kotwal was mainly responsible for the welfare and security of the people of his area. During the reign of Aurangzeb, the kotwals were, generally, appointed by the Emperor, but sometimes by the Nazim. Under kotwal's watchfulness and night patrolling, the citizens should enjoy the response of security and evil-disposed lie in the slough of non-existence. He should discover thieves and the goods they have stolen, remove former grievances and forbid anyone from forcibly entering the house of another. He should so direct that no one shall demand a tax or cess save on arms, elephants, camels sheep, goats and merchandise⁵⁰. Manucci's statement implies that the kotwal appointed Rahdars and guards⁵¹ and, sometimes, it was done by the Zamindar. Through rahdars had a limited jurisdiction, they played an important role in guarding roads and in looking after the welfare of the caravans, travellers and traders. He was expected to be honest, upright and vigilant. He should suppress and check bad elements and see that no officials exploit. If by chance someone is robbed of his belongings he should see that his things are recovered and restored to him. In case of non-recovery, Chaudhury, Qanungos, Zamindars, Muqqadams and other Local people should be held responsible for the theft, and the loss should be recovered from their salaries and income⁵².

Under the Mughals, provincial governors and district officers were also responsible for the safety of roads but the principal burden of protecting travellers and merchants from robbery and harassment fell on the Zamindars,⁵³ who were required to appoint guards and other officials to look after them. *Jahangir (1605-1627)* ordered Zaminders to plant trees on the roads between *Agra* and *Attock* on the Indus and between *Agra* and *Bengal* for the benefit of the travellers and traders. In this way milestones at every kos, wells, reservoirs and sarais were provided for the comfort of the merchants and travellers along the

50 *Op., cit., Ain II (Jarret), pp. 43-44*

51 *Op., cit., Manucci, Storia the Mogor II, p. 421.*

52 A. K. M. Farooque, *Roads and Communications in Mughal India. Idarah-I-Adabiyat-I-Delli*

53 *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, vol. I, p.321.*

roads, while regular staff and attendants were employed to keep the sarais clean and habitable.⁵⁴

Although Akbar tried his best for the safety of roads, but travelling was not considered safe and free from dangers during his reign.⁵⁵ According to an estimate of *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, during Jahangir's reign, local chiefs were responsible for the maintenance and security of the roads. *Husain Nayak* and *Mehdi Nayak* were in-charge of the safety of the road between *Hisapur* and *Baramulla in (Kashmir)*.⁵⁶ *Hawkins* witnessed that during Jahangir's reign, outlaws and thieves infested the roads between Agra and Surat. Akbar had never thoroughly reined in, practically did as they liked with their provinces, and as we have seen in the case of *Mukarab Klan* of Surat, often ignored the most elementary cannons of justice.⁵⁷

During the times of *Shahjahan*, Roads were unsafe due to dacoities. Transport labour was engaged through a headman concerned who was security for the porter's integrity and who charged Re. 1/- from each porter as his dues. The caravans engaged in the transport of commodities were very often quarrelling with one another and *Shahjahan* pacified them by offering rewards and presents.⁵⁸

In spite of the best efforts of the Mughal Emperors travelling was not considered very safe on the highways. Highway robbers, in the eyes of law, were persons too powerful for travellers and those pounced upon them with some weapon and robbed them when distanced from the city. They were subjected to punishment if they were arrested before they had repented and returned the looted prosperity.⁵⁹

54 *Op., cit., Tavernier's Travels*, p. 258.

55 Pramod Sangar, *Growth of the English Trade under the Mughal.*, p. 208.

56 *Op., cit., Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. II, p. 200.

57 E. F. Oaten, *Travellers in India*, p. 146.

58 *Op., cit., Tavernier Travels*, p. 29.

59 S. P. Sangar, *Crime and Punishment in Mughal India*, p. 41.

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

The mean of land transport (commercial goods) were ox driven carts and coolies.⁶⁰ Oxen were used between Balasore and Patna for transporting goods. Other means of transport for Bhutan and Nepal on the hilly routes were Palanquins. Coolies and country horses (ponnies) were short and stout.⁶¹

HUMAN PORTERAGE: Human portorage, has the various modes of loads distribution in effect to the practices and to the muscular habits formed by long usage: back portorage, portorage on the head and balance upon the shoulder Or Human portorage the individual portorage by hand, on the head, on the back, on the shoulder without accessory, with the aid of some device, slung across the shoulder, with the use of pole.⁶²

THE ADHAWIAYAS: There was a group of transport contractors called Adhawiyas. They were an organized group, particularly in western India. The *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* describes them as persons who plied cart for hire.⁶³ Like the Banjaras, the Adhawiyas were in great demand in imperial camps. Sometimes they were forced to supply carts and grain.⁶⁴

Adhawiyas are of immense help to traders. They were either paid a lump sum to accompany a caravan and to provide important item such as bullocks and camels, with the merchants themselves paying customs and Rahdari, or they were paid for each draught animal and cart in which case they paid the customs and Rahdari.⁶⁵ They had a network of agent in important places and could readily provide the transportation for a caravan. As suppliers of hundreds of carts camels and bullocks they had ample capital and could easily buy a new cart, ox or camel when the need arose.⁶⁶ Their business must have flourished at least in Agra and Surat. There were probably too many Adhawiyas, some of

60 *English Factory in India 1618-21*, ed. William Foster, pp.283-84.

61 Tavernier, *Travels in India-II*, Tr. V. Ball, London, 1889, p.163.

62 Kosambi, *Culture and civilization*. P-133 OR, Foster, *Journey*, vol. 1, p 248.

63 Ali Muhammad Khan, *Mirat-I-Ahmadi* (trans. M.F. Lokhandwala), Baroda, 1965, p. 232.

64 W. Foster, *English Factories*. (1618-21) p. 332.

65 Peter Mundy, II, p. 291.

66 *Ibid.*, p. 299.

them not trustworthy. According to Peter Mundy, it was unwise to employ unknown Adhawiyas. They overcharged and were unreliable. Adhawiyas also rented out storage space in their houses, with the rental, perhaps, included in the transportation contract.⁶⁷ Furthermore, when commissioned or ordered to supply grain to an imperial camp, they virtually abandoned all other contracts and trade. When this happened caravans were inordinately delayed some time with great loss.⁶⁸ When merchants accompanied Adhawiyas they had to follow the routes along which the contractors had their agents, from whom they could procure sound carts and fresh animals as required.

BATS: The Turkish travellers *Seidi Ali Reis* says that in India, there was a tribe amongst the 'learned (BAMI) of this land of *Banias* called as the *Bats*. Their business was to escort merchants or travellers from one land to another. For a petty remuneration, they guaranteed their perfect safety. In case of *Rajputs* or "the mounted troops of the land" attacked the caravans. The bats pointed out their daggers at their own breasts. Threatening suicide out of respect for the Bats, Rajputs desisted from their evil purpose and allowed the travellers to proceed unmolested. Occasionally, they carried out their treat. But if such a thing happened on the suicide of Bats became necessary, a terrible calamity befell the country and in that case, people demanded the offenders to be put to death. And the chief of the Rajputs deemed it necessary to kill their sons and daughters also, in fact, to exterminate the whole of their race. *Seidi Ali Reis* had also two such persons given him by the Ahmedabad Muslims.

Terry says the Indian guards served well and faithfully ... amongst whom a stranger may travel alone, with a great charge of money or goods, quite through the country and take them for his guard, yet never be neglected or injured by them. They follow their masters on foot, carrying swords and bucklers or bows and arrows for their defence. *Fitch* observed "In *Ormug*, the merchants of all nations and many Moores and *Gentiles* are staying for business purpose. Here is a very great trade of all sorts of spices, drugs, silk, cloth of silk, fine

67 Ibid., p. 291.

68 W. Foster, *English Factories*. (1618-21) p. 129

tapestries of Persia, great store of pearls which came from the rile of Bahrin and the best pearls of all others and many *horses* of Persia, which serve all India”.⁶⁹

YOGI AND FAQIR: Both Mundy and Tavernier have left description of wandering holy men. The latter stated when there were 80,000 Muslim Faqirs and 1,200,000 yogis. All subsequent references agree that their numbers were indeed large. This group of travellers had not fear of robbers, thieves or custom officers.⁷⁰ They carried neither money nor merchandise.

CARAVANS: Like other countries during Mughal period, India had neither metalled roads nor advanced means of transport. Its vast area and varied physical features, together with the dangers inherent in long journeys, led travellers to form groups of various types. Of these, the Caravan was the most used, while pilgrims formed smaller groups. It provided the maximum of safety and security and made an important contribution to social and commercial life. Multan and Kabul were the main meeting places of the caravans from west and central Asia. A group of travellers or enough people were gathered- together to form one. The main body of caravan, usually, consisted of traders with large supplies of goods. Other travellers – individuals, faqirs and yogis and sometimes pilgrims – joined large caravans for protection and companionship. The leader of the caravan, called *Mir, Salar* or *Bakhshi*, like the captain of the Ship, he had ultimate control of everything while the caravan was on the road. Probably, he was employed by the merchants forming the caravan and, normally, made important decisions after full consultation with them. Every year a caravan leader, called *Mir-Hajj*, was chosen to lead pilgrims to Mecca, and to offer presents to the Sharif of Mecca. People with their luggage, pack animals, mount and carts joined and left caravans as they proceeded on their way. When *Peter Mundy* left Surat for Agra in November 1630, he had only 150 people and fifteen to twenty carts with some camels in his caravan, but soon the number

69 R, K, Mukherjee, *The Economic History of India, 1600-1800*, p. 108.

70 *Ain-i-Akbari*, pp. 141.

rose to between 1700 and 1800 persons and 250 to 300 carts, besides oxen and buffaloes as carriers of transport.⁷¹

To control such a large group of men and beasts, a competent leader was essential. His influence and efficiency could be of considerable help to members of the Caravan. He knew how to deal with *customs-officers*, and occasionally was even able to evade the formalities of customs and *Rahdari* through bringing his influence to bear on the collectors.⁷² He was responsible for selecting halts, and for announcing the departure of the caravans. On the whole, foreign factors organised their caravans competently. Their main purpose was to collect and transport goods to Surat for export to Europe. European factors when sending merchandise consigned it to the charge of a reliable and efficient leader. *Peter Mundy* led such caravans on two or three occasions. In *Feb, 1633*, he was placed in charge of 268 *camels* and 109 *carts* loaded with merchandise. On previous occasions he had received close assistance from locals who knew the languages, customs and routes and those journeys had been accomplished with comparative ease, but in February 1633, he had to lead the caravan alone. The journey of three months, was a constant nightmare for Mundy who gives an account of the responsibilities and duties of a caravan leader, searching for missing camels, arranging for the repair of a cart, settling the customs rates, looking after the safety of the caravan were only a few of his onerous tasks. To ensure added protection of the caravan, armed guards were hired. A general description of a caravan and its defense is given by Fr. Ippolito *Desideri*. He says that the Indian call *cafila* a large body of people armed who combined to travel together.

BANJARAS: Banjaras were a nomadic tribe of public carriers. These Banjaras used to carry along with them their entire household, i.e. their wives and children. "This gipsy tribe writes N. R. Cumberlege, has three distinct divisions, representing the *Brahman, Chattri and Rajput castes*, their occupation

71 R. C. Temple and L.M. Austen, (ed.) *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia*, Vol.II, pp.43-46.

72 Pramod Sangar, *Growth of the English Trade under the Mughals*, Jalandhar pp. 155-163.

is grain carrying. During period under review, the old class of *grain-carriers*, known as *Banjaras* of *Rajputana* still employed hundreds of thousands of oxen in their trade. Some of their caravans amounted as many as 40,000 head of oxen.⁷³ The banjaras had the reputation of being extremely reliable and honest businessmen. It has been said that no instances have been recorded of goods entrusted to their care. Because of their reputation for honesty and reliability, they were paid cash advanced to ensure as far as possible that there was no breakdown in supplies to the army. For courage to join the camp, they were protected. Even during the war they were never attacked by either army.

Tavernier also reported that the Banjaras were divided into four tribes: each numbering about a hundred thousand souls. The first of these tribes has to do with corn only the second with rice, the third with pulse, and the fourth with salts.⁷⁴ There are references to banjaras in the contemporary Hindi literature as well.⁷⁵ We came across references to barter system also. While taking their wares across rivers, merchants were supposed to pay duty to the contractors appointed by the Government. Milk carried by the cowherds was absolved from payment of such duty.

The list of merchandise provided by Sur Das includes the following items:

Cloves, coconuts; arecanuts; asafoetida; raisins; black and long pepper; ajwain; kut and kasfar plants; chiraita or worn wood plant used in medicine; majith or madder; lac, vermilion, Behera, Harar⁷⁶ and myrebelan. The Kut plant seeds are ground and eaten on fast days. The seeds and aromatic bark of the kaifar are used in medicine.

The banjaras carried on the business of conveying agriculture and other produce from one part of the country to another on a very extensive scale. Their

73 K.M.Ashraf, *Life and Condition of People of Hindustan*, p. 157.

74 Tavernier, 1, p. 41. He calls them here, Manares. It seems that he has made a mistake. His description is more appropriate to Banjaras than to Manaris or Mundas. See for the Salt trade of Banjaras, James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, ed., W. Crooke, 11. OUP, 1920, pp. 117-118.

75 Sur Sagar, 1773, Parmanand, 74-1.

76 SS. P. 1528.

migratory habits, their large stock of bullocks and bullock-carts and wagons and pack horses and their intimate knowledge of the roads of the country specially fitted them for their task.⁷⁷ The scale of trade markets was quite small than the present ones. The *Banjara* carrying foodstuff nearly 20,000 packs Oxen, from place to place are noted by *Moreland*. The distinct functions were performed by such market in Mughal India.

According to the 1911 Census⁷⁸ there were

56,000 banjaras in Central Province

80,000 banjaras in Berar

174,000 banjaras in Hyderabad Deccan

TANDA: Tanda word meaning a troop of travelling traders.⁷⁹ Wilson says that *Tanda* consisted of at least 600 or 700 people and 20,000 oxen. In August 1632, Peter Mundy and Party met a Tanda or a camp of Banjaras, alongwith a string of 14,000 oxen which were laden with rice and wheat. Each was carrying about four maunds of load (one maund being equal to 16 gallons). They were going from Agra to Patna. The same month He came across yet another Tanda of oxen numbering 20,000 and laden with Sugar, each carrying 2½ English hundred weight worth of load.⁸⁰ On April 21, 1633, Mundy and his party had to make a “Moccame” (Mugamor halt) between Agra and Surat a Tanda of banjaras consisting of oxen laden with provision was going that way.⁸¹ At the Dusehra festival, they leave the Kuri and from a camp called Tanda, which is generally broken up at the Diwali (festival) when the Tanda moves towards Dumda in the Central Province or other known grain markets.⁸²

COACHES: The coaches and crafts are much alike, the last being only stronger built with main timber for strength. Indian coaches in the 17th century were

77 Malik Muhammad Yassin, p. 484.

78 Russell K.V. and Hira Lal, *The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India*, II London, 1916, p. 162.

79 Wilson, H.H., Tanda S. V. Mundy II,

80 Peter Mundy II.p. 98

81 Ibid, p. 262.

82 Mundy, op. cit., p. 262.

generally drawn by Oxen, two to coach which had but two wheels. It resembled a cart excepting the cover which was like that of a coach in England.⁸³ A palanquin was carried on men's shoulders, six to eight at a time, having a long and gross bamboo. These were spacious enough to lie along. They were used by great men and women. A Doli was like a palanquin, although only one third in size, and carried only by two men, permitting only one person to sit inside cross-legged. It was, usually, closely covered and was used to carry women. Two large milk white oxen are putting in to draw it with circling horns as black as coal, each point tipped with brass, from whence came brass chains, across to the headstall, which is all of scarlet and a scarlet collar to each, of brass bells about their nostrils covered with scarlet. An English coach presented to Jahangir by the East India Company, which created some sensation at court and was used as a model by local craftsman.⁸⁴

PALANQUIN: Ain has given a description of the Palanquin bearers, according to which they carry heavy load on their shoulders and travel through mountains and valleys with their palkees. At court, several thousands of them are kept. The pay of head bearer varies from 192 to 384 d. common bearers get from 12 to 160 d.⁸⁵ According to Tavernier, "Palanquin was meant for comfortable journey. It was (Palanquin) a kind of bed 6 to 7 feet long and 3 feet wide with a small rial all around. A bamboo sustains the cover of the palkeey which was of a satin or brocade. Three persons carried if to make haste 12 men were to carry it. Only four rupees a month were paid, including everything. According to Tavernier, "who desires to travel with honour in India took with him 20 to 30 armed men, with bows and arrows and muscats".⁸⁶ The finest palanquins in India were made at Thatta. It was well known for chariots and palanquins.⁸⁷ A sort of cane, called bamboo supported to cover the palanquin with satin or brocade.⁸⁸ Further he adds that three men, utmost place themselves, at each of those ends, each carry

83 Mundy, II, p. 189.

84 Sir Thomas Roe, II p. 6.

85 *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 254.

86 Tavernier, *Travels in India*, voll. I, pp. 45-46.

87 *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 75.

88 Ovington, op-cit, PP-151-152.

the palanquin on their shoulders, one of the right or other on the left, and they travel in this way faster than our chairmen in Paris and which on easier pace, being trained to the trade from an early age. Herbert Moll expressed that, when a man of substance travelled, he usually hired eight or ten persons to carry his Palanquin. It was usually well contrived with pillows, had an arch canopy over it, usually of scarlet cloth. It was spacious enough for a man to sit or lie in it. Two coolies in front and two at the rear carried it on the shoulders at a speed of four or five miles an hour, with the provision of relievers at particular intervals. Besides these, 8 or 10 coolies or 'chairmen' well to do travellers hired an equal number of musketeers and pikemen to defend them against beats or robbers. They charged the travellers or other persons sitting in it, in getting provisions from the nearby villages, firewood from the jungles and earthen pot for half a penny for the purpose of cooking their meals.⁸⁹ In 4 leagues a day, you take 12 men to carry the palanquin, so that they may relieve one another from time to time.⁹⁰ The nobles also imitated this style when not moving with the royal train.⁹¹

In the towns of the mode travelling by the royalty was displayed on the magnificent scale, surrounded by cavalry, infantry, eunuchs, armed guards who surrounded the *sawari* very closely. The corresponding route was well decorated with flowers and flags and water was sprinkled on the road. The procession of William Norris an ambassador designate sent by William III, the English King to the Court of Aurangzeb left an indelible mark due to its magnificent nature. "It was preceded by state horses, richly caparisoned, trumpeters, state palanquins, peon, lancers played on haut boys kettle drums and bag pipes, musketeers and archers in due order. These were followed by a person of a rank carrying naked swords and liveried servants on horseback. The sword of the state was carried before the palanquin carrying the distinguished ambassador. As many as 50 peons followed, bearing silver lance and swords with scarlet scabbards. These were in attendance two chief peons carrying silver gilt fanning feathers. Behind them were members of the embassy seated on the couches. Some gentlemen

89 *The present state of proper India*, p. 255.

90 Tavernier op-cit. vol. I, p-72.

91 Bernier, op-cit, pp-370-371.

were on horse-back. The entire procession and ceremony connected with it made a deep impact on the passerby as the “entire thing” looked picturesque”.⁹²

MANORI TRIBE: Tavernier writes about the tribes which were engaged in the profession of transportation called Manori. He also expressed that there were four tribes in India called ‘Manaris’ each was numbering about one lac, which lived in tents. Their main job was to transport provisions from one place to another. The first of these tribes dealt with corn, the second with *rice*, *pulse* and the forth with *salt*.⁹³ The Hire of a carriage amounted to about Re. 1 per day. The charges from Surat to Agra Rs. 40 to 45 and the journey took about 40 days. Same was the case with journey from Surat to Golconda. The palanquin carriers received Rs. 4 a month and Rs. 5 if the journey was long one and required more than 60 days to finish it.⁹⁴

TRANSPORT CHARGES: The rental oxen, ox-cart and coaches varied in *Sind*, a coach drawn by oxen could be hired for 25 *pense* (English) per day. Cart which carried goods and merchandise had different rates. From Patna to Agra the charge of a cart was one and half rupees (1½ rupees) per mound carried on different routes and in bad seasons, when it was impossible to use carts, *oxen* were used as pack animals. Then the charges were probably higher. Tavernier also gives a clear account of the transport charges. He writes that the carriage of 81 mounds would cost Rs. 153 and tip of Rs. 8, if carts arrived in time. Losses by rains and robbery were common. The charges from Agra to Surat via Burhanpur were Rs.14. ¾ per camel load of app. 500 lbs. The transport labour was engaged through a headman who stood surety for the porter’s integrity and charged Re. 1 from each porter as his dues.⁹⁵ Like oxen, elephants, camels, horses and mules were used as mounts, and as pack and draught animals. Elephants were used by the Emperor and his household and nobles. They are very expensive and their prices varied from Rs. 10 to 100.⁹⁶

92 William Noris, “*The embassy of Sir William Norvis to Aurangzeb*” *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. II, 1922-23.

93 *Tavernier’s Travels in India*, Vol. 1, p. 41

94 Tavernier, op-cit, Vol. I. PP-37-38.

95 Tavernier, op-cit, Vol. I, PP. 33-35.

96 Farooque, *Roads and Communication in Mughal India*, pp.217 to 220.

ANIMAL PORTERAGE: In India, the complex of Animal motive, force is very ancient and linked with the origins of domestication and diverse animals were trained for transportation. Among the kinds of animals used for transport, the ox seems to have played a major role in the pre-historic civilization of western India. In comparison, the horse, which was perhaps already domesticated at that period, would not appear to have been fully employed until the Vedic period. Other animals, such as camels, elephants, mules, donkeys, goats and sheep, seem also to have been included in the livestock of the ancient inhabitants of the Indus Valley. Beside caravans the other means of transport in Mughal period, according to *Ain-I-Akbari* and other contemporary sources were – bullocks, horses, elephants, camels, cows, carts, mules, yaks and litters etc. but bullock-carts of several designs and litters (palkees) of various design were common means of transport.⁹⁷

Heavy luggage was carried by the bullock-carts or camels. While the poor preferred to walk on foot and of sheer compulsion and carrying their load on their shoulders. *Tavernier's* testimony stands in good strain when he remarked the manner of travelling in India is more commodious than anything that had been invented for ease in *France* or *Italy*.⁹⁸

HORSES: Horses have remained the main 'hunt' of the *Delhi Sultans* and later on by the *Mughals*, due to their immense utility for the cavalry wing of Army. According to *Ain*, the Horses were classified into seven types (1) Arabi (2) Persian (3) Mujannas (4) Turkey (5) Yabo A small horse- Mule (6) Tazi (7) Jangla.⁹⁹ Indian horses were inferior to those of Arab. The West Asian hired war horses from *Arabia*, *Turkey*, *Badakshan*, *Tibet* and *Kashmir*. Proves after droves arrived from and Akbar had about 12 thousand horses of *Iran* and *Turan* in his stable. For the convenience of merchants he had set apart a place for the horse dealers and an officer-in-charge with the good knowledge about horses was appointed known as *Amir-i-Karwansra*. The payment was made in advance to the

97 Pramod Sangar, *Travel in Mughal India. Journal of Indian History* (ed.) By B. Sobhanan Vols. LXXVI-LXXVIII. 1997-99. Department of History. Kariavattom. Thiruvananthapuram. p.47.

98 Tavernier, *Travels*, Vol. I, p. 45.

99 *Ain I (B)*, p. 141.

merchants bringing horses by the orders of the King. Throughout the 16th century, the horse supply had been vital question for the armies of the Deccan kingdom. Abbas stated that under Sher shah, the total strength of the standing Army would have been nearly 300,000 horsemen, besides nearly a 100,000 infantry¹⁰⁰ so the good horses were mostly meant for the king and his army and not for the commonality as they used local policies, mules or Indian breed horses. There used to be frequent fairs in many big cities where horses, cattle and other beasts were displayed and sold, the market was known as 'NAKHAS'.¹⁰¹ Horses were employed for riding not for burden. Good horses, generally, were brought to India from *Persia*, *Arabia* and *Tartary* and, thus, could be put to such 'Drugeries'. The kachhi was the hollowed back and horse from Cutch and had in Mundy's time, the reputation of being equal with the Arabian Horse. In the northern mountains of Hindustan, a kind of small but strong horses bred, which were called *Gut*, and continues of Bengal, near (Kuch-Bihar) another kind of horses occurs which rank between the *Gut* and *Turkish* horses and were called *Tanghan*. They are strong and powerful.¹⁰² The use of horses was very little in transportation. As pointed out by Tapan Ray Chaudhury the preference for said slower modes of travel no doubt, explained by the limited availability of horses in India and the very high price of the imported varieties.¹⁰³

The East India Company kept a set of Persian horses from the use of their factors and servants in principal settlement of India. Every Amir had according to his Mansab, 10, 8, 6 or 5 horses of several kinds like the *Persian*, *Arabian*, *Kachhi*, *Shir Wan*, *Qirgiz*, *Badakshan*, *Tibet* and *Kashmir* etc. In a letter, Thomas Rastell from Swally, informed the company that they had captured two ships of the Portuguese carrying coconuts and Arabian horses.¹⁰⁴ Men of means used *Pakis*, elephants and horse carriages, horses were expensive and not every one could afford to maintain and ride them. The price of a horse varied

100 P. Saran, *The Provincial Government of the Mughals (1526 -1658)*, Allahabad. 1941, p. 254.

101 *Travels of Peter Mundy*, Vol. II, p. 189.

102 *Ain-I-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 133.

103 Tapan Ray Chaudhury & Irfan Habib, *Cambridge Economic History of India (Inland Trade)* (Cambridge 1982) Vol-1, p. 348.

104 *The English Factories, 1634-36, Introduction*, p. xxxiv.

from 500 Muhurs (10 Muhur about Rs. 10–00) to 2 rupees. In *Aurangzeb's* time no Hindus except the Rajputs could ride on *Arab* and *Iraqi* horse. Perhaps the regulation was not enforced earlier. But even for an ordinary Indian it was difficult to maintain a good horse. The lowest price of 2 Rupees does not seem beyond the capacity of an average person, but their maintenance was still difficult. Thus in some areas donkeys and oxen were the only means of transport.

There was a great demand for the supply of horses in Hindustan. Apart from the enormous military demand for the supply of horses, such animal was also commonly employed for conveyance, pleasure, riding and racing. The choice animals found a ready market in Hindustan. The fondness for horses had, by no means, been confined to the Muslims; Hindus were equally anxious to serve their old time ideas of military equipment and were slowly substituting horses for elephants. Thus, there was a great demand for the supply of horses in Hindu states of Rajputana and the Deccan, especially, in the latter where climatic and other conditions discouraged the breeding of horses and the stock had to be replenished from outside from time to time. For the annual gifts of the Sultan, special arrangements were made to procure the best horses from every country and a very good price was paid.¹⁰⁵ Horses were also regularly purchased for the supply of the Royal stables. Some special breeds were brought from *Yemen*, other from *Kis, Hornuz* and *Aden*, others still together with *Mules* from *Persia*.¹⁰⁶

BREEDS OF HORSES: During this period horses were divided into two main divisions, firstly personal, *Khasangi* and 2ndly *Non-personal* (i.e. belonging to other stables of the states. Again they were graded into seven different sections according to their breed – yabu, Tazi and Raman Yanglah. *Ibn Battuta*: India was also having a flourishing trade in horses with the *Turkish* country, *kipchak* (sea of Azoy). In *Kipchak* a good horse would not cost more than rupees or a *dinar*, while in India its cost was between 100 to 200 rupees (500 dinars). The Carvanas which came from *Kipchak* to India via Gomal pass consisted mainly of 6,000 horses. The owners on entering *Sind*, would pay a duty of seven silver

105 Elliot and Dowson-III, p. 57.

106 Marcopolo in Yule, 183-4, Ibid, vol. II, p. 340, *The account of Ibn Battuta*, p. 156.

dinars and a further duty was levied at *Multan*. The Caravans of horses first came to the chief frontier mart of India, *Multan* and from there would be sent to different places. The Indians did not buy, 'race, horses, as they would come mainly from *Yemen*, *Oman* and *Fars* and cost between 1000 to 4000 dinars each.¹⁰⁷

All types of horses were mustered before the Emperor according to a fixed rule & regulation which is described in the *Ain-I-didan-I-asp*. Formerly, they were brought before him every day in the company of all sorts of animals, heading the procession on *Sundays*. But later they were inspected on *Sundays* alone, the day which was set aside for the inspection of those animals.¹⁰⁸ The number of horses daily mustered is not possible to ascertain but those belonging to the dealers, which were inspected by the emperor, varied from twenty to a hundred per day.¹⁰⁹

I have fixed the approximate number on the following lines:

Chhelgani – Stables 240 horses

Princes Stable 90 horses

Turki, Rahwar 30 horses

Imperial Stud Bred 30 horses

390 horses

CAMELS: Camels were commonly used in sandy parts of the country like *Multan* and *Rajasthan*. Camels were much better suited for both personal conveyance and transportation of goods. The Shiftiest camels came from Ajmer, while the best in carrying burden were from Sindh. According to *Ain*-record, camels came from *Jodhpur*, *Nagor*, *Bikaner*, *Jaisalmer*, *Bhatinda*, *Bhatner*, while in *Sindh* also

107 *Ain-I-Akbari*, Vol. I, p.133. Akbar was very fond of horses as he considered them to be of great importance for the three branches of the government and the money was doled out in advance to the merchants to avoid any delay.

108 Ibid.

109 Ibid, p. 141. 134.

the camels were found in abundance. *Lok* and *Jama Maza* were two important varieties of camels. Ain has also given a vivid description of the varieties, nature regulations and the food administered to the camels. They were looked after very well. Akbar had even given names to the camels as *Bughadi* (male) and *Jamaza* (female). Jamaza excel in swiftness of speed.¹¹⁰ The use of camels in Caravans was not popular on all routes. They were in good demand from Surat to Agra, and in Sind and Baluchistan.¹¹¹ Often Agra goods were being sent down to Surat in huge camel caravans.¹¹² Camels used as a beast of burden could carry on an average ten maunds of weight. Often Agra goods were being sent down to Surat in huge camel caravans. Todd refers to qatars of loaded camels passing through Haiderabad (in Sind), Romi, Bhakkar, Shikarpur and Uch.¹¹³

KAJAWA: was a camel-pannier and was used for carrying slave women, servants and attendants. Amari, was a little coach made first with strong pulleys and ropes on the back of an elephant 'standing on packsaddles or things of purpose, at a sedan with two poles. It was carried between two elephants in the manner of a litter.¹¹⁴ "The Princesses and great ladies of the seraglio have also different modes of travelling. Some prefer Chandolis which are borne on men's shoulders.¹¹⁵

COWS: Cow and Oxen have always been very important in Indian life. Cows were formed for their beauty and swiftness. It has been claimed that they could travel on hundred and twenty miles in twenty-four hours. Not only caravans but the Emperor and his house hold also used them regularly. One hundred selected cows were always kept ready in the imperial byres, and forty un-laden one were always taken on hunting expeditions.¹¹⁶ Abul Fazl records in Ain that in Akbar's cow stable there were pairs of cows whose price exceeded more than 500 rupees.¹¹⁷ Khulasat-ul Tawarikh, also records that a pair of Gujarati cows cost

110 Ain- Vol-III P-62.

111 *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. I, pp. 143-46.

112 *English Factory*. 1618-21. pp -74, 90.

113 James Todd, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* (ed. W. Crooke) II 1920, p-578

114 Ibid. p. 190-191.

115 Bernier, (Ed.) Constable, p. 371.

116 J. N. Sarkar, *India of Aurangzeb*, Calcutta, 1901, p. 66.

117 Ain I Tr. By Bloch.,p. 157.

more than 500 rupees.¹¹⁸ As regards the transportation charges we obtain detailed information from 'Huge's Letter' of 5th October 1620.

OXEN: Oxen have always been very important pet animal in Indian life. Oxen also played the leading role in pulled carts, carried packs and were ridden by travellers. Johan Fryer, an English surgeon had a great praise for the Indian Oxen.¹¹⁹ According to Thomas Roe, the marry monarch Jahangir, once, had a joy ride with his queen Nurmahal in an open wagon "drawn by bullocks, himself charter and no man near."¹²⁰ Sebastian, Manrique, noticed that *Shahjahan* maintained 6300 Gujarati oxen. Some times the Emperor maintained nearly ten thousand oxen for cartage and other services. Peter Mundy, Tavernier and Ovington mention, that pack oxen, ox drawn carts as well as camels were the chief means of transport. Describing the manner of travelling that in India: oxen taken the place of horses and there are some of them whose places are as easy as those of ours Hacks. He also adds that the carts were, usually, able to traverse only a kos in an hour. During period under review, the old class of grain-carriers, known as *Banjara*, in Rajputana, still employed hundreds and thousands of oxen in their trade. Some of their caravans amounted as many as 40,000 head of oxen.¹²¹

BUFFALOS: The buffalos is better suited than the latter to zones of heavy rainfall or that regions where work is done in water,¹²² also used as drought-animals. The use of buffalo was exclusively for carrying large bags of fresh water.

SHEEP AND GOATS: The least costly means of transport are the sheep and goats which graze alongside the trails. All merchandise which can be distributed in small loads, such as wool, grains, salt or borax, is consigned to them in stitched bags consisting of two double leather pouches placed on the back of the

118 Sujan Rai, *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh*, Lahore, 1966, p 96.

119 John Fryer, *New Account of the East India and Persia being Nine Years Travels*, 3 Vols, by William Crooke, London 1909, Vol 1, p. 295-6

120 *The Embassy of Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul*, (ed.) William Foster, 2 Vols, Indian Edition, 1, p 426.

121 K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Condition of the people of Hindustan*, p. 137.

122 Watt, *Commercial Products*, p,735-6

animals like saddles and attached by means of chest-straps and cruppers.¹²³ Sheep can carry loads of from 5 to 11 kilos over a daily distance of 8 km; they usually follow behind more hardy goats, which can carry from 7 to 18 kilos of merchandise in their bags.¹²⁴

DOGS: Dogs played an important part in the daily life of the Banjaras. They belonged to special breed and were used for hunting and guarding the camp.¹²⁵ Hawking gives an interesting account, that Jahangir was also fond of hunting and 400 personal hunting dogs were found in his camp.¹²⁶

ELEPHANT: The use of Elephants as a means of conveyance was reserved for the sovereign or to those whom he granted permission to use them. Besides, the purchase and the maintenance of Elephants were anyway far too expensive to be of popular use.¹²⁷ Abbas gives an important account that Sher Shah maintained 5000 war Elephants. These were used, however, only for pulling heavy guns or similar other equipage¹²⁸. Akbar's stable had great and small, male and female elephants to the number of 6,751. Among them were 100 of extraordinarily size.¹²⁹ Monserrate described about the ladies that the ladies of harrem were riding on female elephant and maid servants riding on female camels. Father Monserrate also described about Akbar's regin that the manner in which ladies of the court travelled. "The queens ride on female elephants, hidden from view in fairly decorated houdahs. They are guarded and escorted by five hundred old men of very dignified and venerable appearance. Great care is taken to drive to a great distance all that are found in the time of the queen's march. The ladies in waiting of the queen's follow their mistresses on camels under white sun shades."¹³⁰ He also expressed that the oxen, camels and

123 Pant. *Social Economy*, p- 224

124 Hooker, *Himalayan Journals*, Vol. 1, p-272

125 Russell and Lal, op. cit., p. 188.

126 E. F Otan-Early travels in India, Lucknow, 1973-PP-30-60-72.

127 H. K. Naqvi, *Urbanisation and Urban Centers Under the Great Mughals*, I.I.A.S. Shimla 1972. p. 71.

128 P. Saran, *The Provinceal Government of the Mughals (1526 -1658)*, Allahabad. 1941, p. 255.

129 Brij Narain and Sri Ram Sharma (Trans.) *A Contemporary Dutch Chronicle of Mughal India*, Calcutta, 1957, p. 35.

130 Father Monserrate, *Commentaries* p. 5.

elephants were used for Army food supply.¹³¹ The use of elephants was necessarily to carry heavy goods. Thomas Roe expressed in his account that the caravans of royal ladies riding on female elephants, which were decorated with silky and golden clothes.¹³²

CATTLE FAIRS: Special cattle fairs on a very large scale were held in well known places for the sale of all kinds of *Cattle, e.g. Horses, oxen, camels, cows and buffaloes*, and the people came here from long distances to *buy and dispose* of their *animals*.¹³³

Under the Mughals supply to royal stables was maintained from the country-breed horses as well as those imported from outside. For the former, experienced supervisors were appointed and for the latter an elaborate system was devised by Akbar, to keep the royal stables supplied with animals. There was provision of a caravan sarai, at the capital, where horse dealers could stay in “convenient quarters”. He appointed an important officer as the Amir of the Sarai, and a bitikchi to supervise the influx of animals, to keep a proper record. Able judges examined the animals and fixed their prices.¹³⁴ Moreover, “the Government by law had declared that no horses could be sold without the permission of the king or his agents”. The emperor bought “all good horses”. The money was publically counted” and given to the dealer in gold coins. A profit of 50% was given as a grace or royal favour.¹³⁵ A ready sum of many was kept apart for this purpose in the public audience hall.¹³⁶

YAK: The YAK (*Bos grunniens*)¹³⁷ a long-haired bovine with a horse- like tail, living at an altitude between 3,000 and 6,000 meters, is the caravan animal par excellence on the Tibetan plateau. Being robust, it transports with ease 70 to 80

131 Monserate PP-134-137-138-175-176.

132 E. F Otean op-cit, PP-75-77.

133 Life and Con. pp. 137-38.

134 Ibid., p. 139.

135 Ibid. 141.

136 Monserrate 209.

137 Hobson- Jobson, pp, 975-6

kos in deep snow, but adapts with difficulty to climatic change. Dzo¹³⁸ can tolerate the cold of high mountains and the heat of low valleys. Docile and hardy, they convey across rocky terrain and glaciers the load of three bearers at a pace of 5 to 6 km an hour. Probably Yak and Dzo carried for transportation purpose in particular route i.e, Patna to Lhasa via Nepal; and Patna was linked with Nepal via Hajipur, Mehsi, Mothihara, Hitoura, while Nepal was linked through hilly routes with Tibet; Bhutan and Lhasa. While agriculture has always provided the Sherpas with bulk of their food supply, the breeding of Yak and other cattle adds much protein to their diet and, until recently, it also allowed them to engage in a profitable trade. Traditionally, ownership of Yak makes us more over a source of prestige. Notwithstanding the high prestige value of Yak breeding and its place in ritual, which is unparalleled by any comparable significance of agriculture, it would be misleading to think of the sherpas foremost as a pastoral people.¹³⁹ While the role of cross-bred calves' results in the greatest return for the labour involved in keeping a herd of yak, the cash earned in this way is by no means the only profit a sherpa derives from the ownership of cattle. Milk products play an important role in *sherpa's* diet. Most of the milk is used for butter making. The main efforts of cattle owners are directed towards the production of butter. Great quantities of butter are required for domestic as well as for ritual use.¹⁴⁰

The sherpa's favourable position in trade was as middleman between Tibet and neighboring country. It was the trade with Tibet which gave the chance to the sherpa's for acquiring valuables, jewellery, clothing, household-goods and ritual objects of Tibetan and Chinese origin, while in many journeys connected with this trade kept them in touch with the aesthetic and intellectual interest of their Tibetan neighbours.

138 Jean Deloche, (Tr. from French) by James Walker. *Transport and Communications in India Prior to Steam Locomotion Vol 1: Land Transport*. New York 1993 p, 227

139 John Murray. *Himalayan Traders*. p. 43, Pub. Christoph Von Fryer-Him Endore, 1975.

140 Ibid., p 48.

Table 4.2

Animal Tax in Pargana Merta, 1634 (based on Nainsi)

Sr. No.	Name of the Animals	Rate of Grazing per animal in Dugani)
1	Cow	5
2	Buffalo	10
3	Jhute (Buffalo-calf)	8
4	Baratho (cow-calf)	4
5	Goat and Sheep	1
6	Jhunpi (Hut)	15

B.L.Bhadani, *Peasants Partisans and Entrepreneurs*, Rawat Pub., New Delhi, 1999, p.

As regards the transportation charges we obtain a detailed information from 'Huggs Letters', of 5th October 1620.

Table 4.3

Distance between Cities

Mode of Transport	Station	Distance load/ Weight charges/time
Cart	Agra to Patna	
Camel Load	Agra to Surat via Burhanpur	500 lbs. Rs. 14 ³ / ₄ ¹⁴¹
In 1638 a cartage contract on this route was settled for 2 ³ / ₄ per 74 lbs.		
In 1651 the chare from Agartala – Ahmedabad per camel was Rs. 15.3 being on the Rajputana route.		
In 1639	Agra to Lahore	Rs. 2 per maund
	Petermundy rates that carries from Agra to Ahmedabad	Custom duty Rs. 45/- per cart and R. 9/8 per camel load. ¹⁴²
	Surat to Agra	40 days Rs. 40 to 45/-
	Surat to Golconda	40 days Rs. 40 to 45/- ¹⁴³
Palanquin Carriers		Rs. 4 or 5 per day.

141 Factory Records, vol. I

142 Moreland, *Akbar to Aurangzeb*, pp. 150-51.

143 Tavernier Travels, p. 20.

A cart which carries 81 mounds cost Rs.153 and Rs.8 more if it be punctual.

A cart which carries 44 mounds and is carried by 6 oxen is let for Rs.80.

A cart that carries 4 men and is carried by 6 oxen is let for Rs.22.

A horse is let for Rs.10

According to Hughes, the journey by land from Patna to Agra - 30 to 35 days.

John Marshal records, Travel from Surat to Agra – 40 days Via –Burhanpur about 550 meels, from Agra to Patna – 550 = 30 per days.

MODES OF WATER TRANSPORT

COSTAL TRANSPORT: The peninsular India, though relatively isolated from the north, physically as well as politically, for long pursued independent policies and was often influenced by its extensive cost line and consequent sea born trade. A cursory glance at the contemporary records of the times proves that India pursued a flourishing trade in the 17th century. Trade through rivers, by boat, was very convenient, especially, during the monsoon season, when the roads were flooded with water or even washed away. Moreover, during inclement weather, travelling by boat along the river was the only convenient means of getting from place to place. River borne trade admirably organized by Akbar. Boats were constructed on the orders of the government to carry both passengers and goods: other boats, called ghurabs, were specially built for sieges and river fighting.¹⁴⁴ Here are some names which Mirza Nathan mentions: Bachari, Bajra, Balia, Bathila, Ghurab, Jalia, Jaltrang, Katari, Khelna, Khudadia, Kusa, (two or more boats tied with a platform over them called Mand). Manki, Nadula, Pal, Parkusas, Pashta, Poara, Sundra were also The peninsular India, though relatively isolated from the north, physically as well as politically, for long pursued independent policies, were often influenced by its extensive coastline and consequent sea borne trade. Popular¹⁴⁵ During Akbar's reign, Shipbulding

144 Mundy II, p. 144.

145 Mirza Nathan, op. cit.,

centers were also established in Bengal, Sind, Thatta and Kashmir.¹⁴⁶ Harbours were improved and experienced men employed as harbour-masters. Seamen, too, were selected according to their ability and experience. Finally, to facilitate riverine transport and travel, river tolls were regularized and merchants well treated when in harbour. Conversely, open sea navigation, without the supporting orientation of landmarks, necessitated the employment of specific procedures and instruments.¹⁴⁷

It is likely that sailors in ancient India possessed: i, precise astronomical knowledge regarding the way in which one was guided by the sun or the stars. ii Sufficient knowledge regarding time and season to determine the ship's position they estimated its average speed on the basis of experience while reckoning with the wind's velocity or the prevailing conditions of the sea. iii, The manner in which the presence of certain birds was interpreted. The nature of the clouds and the shade of the water, were kept on deck as land finders too, if needed, indicate the coast and confirm bearings. Ancient texts emphasize the skill of the pilots, their extraordinary nautical perceptivity through which they were sensitive to the slightest modification of wind or waters; however, it would not appear that nautics made any significant progress during that period.¹⁴⁸

Jacques de Vitery in his *Historia Orientalis* (1215-20) mentions the use of the compasses in India. This instrument consisting of the needle and acacia rod with a kind of fish of thin, hollow iron, its head and tail indicate the two cardinal directions, the former pointing south, the later to the north. In the *khitat* of Maqrizi, it is written that, the sailors who voyage on the Indian ocean, when night is dark and they do not view the stars which serve as a guides to recognize the (four) cardinal points, make constant use of an instrument. For long –distance voyages, navigators made use of nautical documents. Gujarati sailors consulted in the 17th century types of manuals (*Rot-Namah*) containing summaries of astronomical observations and plotting of itineraries, as well as sketches

146 Ain I (Bloch.), p. 290.

147 Ibid , pp. 290-92.

148 Lallanji, in J.I..H. Vol. XL. 1962, part II, pp. 322-6; Mookerji, *History of Indian Shipping*, p.72.

showing the characteristic contours of the shores of same ports. Recently, some examples of these maritime charts have come to light (and are now in possession of the national museum)

Thomas Roe wrote in his journal annals 1615 that on one of the Comoro Island he met an Arabian pilot having 'a good knowledge of sailing is evident that the precession of numerous detailed itineraries contained in the Arabian nautical instructions implies the use of navigational contained in the Arabian nautical instruments implies the use of navigational charts.¹⁴⁹ From the few observations of the foreign travellers that one has been able to gather, it emerges that the Indian coasters ran no risks what so ever security was for them of greater importance than speed.¹⁵⁰ The indigenous boats occasionally employed European pilots for long-distance voyages. It is also a fact that sailors of the European companies sometimes requested the services of Indian pilots to navigate along the coast.¹⁵¹

With the discovery of the sea route to the east, India became the center of the commercial activities of several European nations. The advent of the English and the Dutch on Gujarat coastal introduced an element of competition, both in the coastal as well as in the foreign land. They also conducted their coastal trade by boats and collected goods at various small seaports of Gujarat which were later transported to England in the larger vessels that came out yearly from England to Surat. Tavernier comments that, "the ship owned by Europeans was considered safer than the others, because Indians neither fully understood navigation nor employed good pilots.¹⁵² Moreland does not accept this explanation of Tavernier and asserts that the European ships were more popular because of the cheapness of freight and greater security."¹⁵³

149 Thomas Roe (the Embassy, 1926 edition, 8 13-24)

150 Tavernier op., cit., Vol. I, 5; Fryer, op., cit., Vol. I p-74, Manrique, po., cit., Vol.II, p 28, A Hamilton, op., cit., 1930, edition Vol. I, p-133.

151 Fryer op., cit., Vol. I, p-74

152 Tavernier, op., cit., Vol. I, pp. 1-5.

153 W.H. Moreland, *India at The Death of Akbar*, (Re-print Delhi- 1985) p. 199.

Ralph Fitch (1583-91) expressed his experience about Indian Coast that when he went to Satgoan from Agra with one hundred and forty boats, laden with all sorts of merchandise. Another traveller, Peter Mundy, saw great barges of three, four, or five hundred tons each, plying between Agra, Allahabad, Etawah, Patna and Dacca. These boats belonged to nobles, and carried their goods and families.¹⁵⁴ Another type of flat boat, called patella, was carrying timber and stones.¹⁵⁵ According to the Ain, there were about 40,000 large and small boats to be hired in and around Thatta the Indus Delta region.¹⁵⁶ With the expansion of trade which followed upon the consolidation of Mughal rule and the establishment of European factories in India, river traffic expanded considerably. Great and small vessels transported sundry commodities to western and northern India from Bengal and a thriving trade soon developed between India, Persia, Arabia, China and the South seas.¹⁵⁷ Bengal was the main supplier of muslins, khassa, woven silk, and fine cotton yarns.¹⁵⁸

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION: The presence and functioning of postal system during Mughal period envisaged sound political and economic conditions of the country. This was, primarily, responsible for the mobility of men and material required for the safety or defense of the country. Every post was equipped with the relay of horses report writers and runners stationed at every half or quarter Kos. Everyday or alternate day the Sultan received News reporting regarding the progress or movement of Army and Sultan's physical welfare was conveyed to the soldier at far of places

The successful venture of the Mughals in holding the vast chunk of territories or area was mainly due to their efficient system of imperial post system and vigilance in the maintenance and upkeep of roads. This, obviously, resulted in peace and prosperity of the empire since the distant areas of the empire were properly co-coordinated with the centre. It further stimulated the trade and

154 Early Travels, p. 26.

155 Peter Mundy II, p. 224.

156 Ain II (Jarret), p. 354.

157 Bowrey, T. *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal* (Ed. R.C.Temple) Nandeln, 1967, p. 133.

158 Ibid .

commerce of the country and enriched the Mughal Empire. While the government had a system of rapid *communications* through mounted relays and relay runners, private persons, especially merchants, had professional messengers to convey letters, commercial papers and news. The bazar qasids, who waited till enough letters were given to them by private persons for a particular place, were, naturally, irregular. The government opened its own messenger system for use by private parties at set fees.¹⁵⁹ To govern their vast empire effectively, the Mughals had to secure the maximum degree of co-ordination and co-operation. The Emperor needed comprehensive, accurate and frequent information from every corner. Sher Shah's efficient road system linked all parts of his kingdom. He built *sarais* which also served as postal stations, all along the roads at every two kos (4 miles). At each of 1700 sarais the horses were always kept ready to relay government messages or news of importance. News was brought regularly and swiftly to the king from far and near. With the expansion of the empire under Akbar the need for a faster postal system grew. He retained runners and horse-ports but introduced some new features. The postal service was, for its day, incredibly fast and efficient, unfortunately for the ordinary citizen; however, it was only available to government officers for the conveyance of official letters and documents with the expansion and consolidation of the empire. Under Akbar, more attention was given to roads and communication. With the coming of the Europeans, the increased demand for certain commodities influenced Mughal commercial policy. To encourage trade exemptions from or reduction in customs and road tolls were often granted, but in an attempt to prevent smuggling and other abuses strict supervision was introduced. As overseas and inter-regional trade grew, the pressure on roads leading to commercial centres increased. This situation was partly a result, partly a cause of the improved facilities provided by the government.

MEWARS AND RUNNERS: Akbar's most valuable contribution was the employment of Mewars.¹⁶⁰ Natives of Mewat, they were traditionally regarded as

159 Irfan Habib in *Proceedings of Indian History Congress, 46th Session, Amritsar, 1985*, pp. 236-52; Irfan Habib, *The Economic History of Medieval India, A Survey*, p. 35.

160 *Ain-I-P*-262.

good runners. Under Akbar they served in the infantry and, at first, were mostly employed as spies. Arif Qandahari says there were at least four thousand Mewaris employed to relay news to the Emperor from all parts of the empire. Ovington noted that letters were carried to distant places with the utmost safety. They were so fast that a chain of Mewars could bring news from Bengal to Agra within ten days. Akbar was rightly proud of employing them in useful service as guards and runners. Pelsaert was, particularly, impressed by Jahangir's runners, who carried there sovereign's letters and messages quickly. He further says that -
 -----"Royal runners are posted in villages 4 or 5 kos, apart taking their turns of duties throughout day and night and they take over a letter immediately breath and hand it over to another messenger. So the letter goes steadily on and will travel 80 kos between night and day."¹⁶¹

MOUNTED MESSENGERS: Arif Qandahari writes that horse chawkis were established on all important highways at every 5 kos (10 miles) where two horsemen were always ready to carry the news. Through them, nobles and khans were entitled to send letters, petitions and messages on urgent matters to the emperor.

DAK CHAUKIS: As the empire expanded, more and more dak chawkis were constructed. The marked expansion in their numbers began under Jahangir and continued under Shahjahan who ordered Aurangzeb, then governor of the Deccan to build new Dak-Chawkis between Hyderabad and the Karnatak. Others were established between Hyderabad and Burhanpur and were placed in the Charge of Zamindars and other officials. Aurangzeb's special interest in the postal system led him to build many more dak chaukis throughout the empire.

PIGEONS: The Mughals used carrier pigeons. Pelsaert remarked that there are occasional references to pigeons as message carriers ¹⁶² During the Mughal period Emperor and Nobles used carrier pigeons for communication. According to medieval writers, both Urdu and Persian, pigeons offered a convenient, suitable method of communicating with one's friends and beloved also. Father

161 Pelsaert, Francisco, op-cit. P-58.

162 *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi* in Elliot, Vol. 111, p. 203, Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, pp. 393-94.

Monserrate noted their homing capability. Traveller, Paleasert noted that, Jahangir kept pigeons to carry letters in the time of need and great urgency or during the reign. But these were used only over shorter distance.¹⁶³ Abul fazl, alluded that the "Rath Pigeon" being a good letter-carrier, confirming contention.¹⁶⁴ Jahangir was keen to use pigeons as messengers with regard to carrier pigeons (Kabutar-I-Nambar). It had been stated to me, in the course of conversation that, in the time of the Abbaside caliph, they taught to Baghdad pigeons that were styled letter- carriers and were one half larger than the wild pigeon. I bade the pigeon fancier to teach their pigeons and they taught some of them in such a manner that we let them fly from Mandu in the early morning, and if there was much rain, they reached Burhanpur by 2-1/2 Pahars of the day or even 1-1/2 Pahars. If the air was very clear, most of them arrived by one Pahar of the day and some by four gharis hours of the day.¹⁶⁵ Pigeon flying was also a favorite past time of the Emperor and their Nobles. Hawkins writes that Jahangir used 10,000 pigeons for his personal enjoyment.¹⁶⁶ Mannuci, also mentions that Pigeon flying along with the information that Pigeons were also engaged for carrying messages from one place to another.¹⁶⁷

POST ARRANGEMENTS: The role of post was an integral part of the Economic and Political system of any country. This was primarily responsible for the mobility or movement of men and material. Every post of relays of horses was stationed and at every half or quarter kos runners and report writers were appointed. Every day, or the alternate day the Sultan used to receive news reporting, the progress of the army, and intelligence of the health of the Sultan was regularly conveyed to the soldiers. Thus, false news was prevented from circulation.¹⁶⁸ This is the earliest system with greater vigor. Two hundred years later Sultan Sikander Lodi revived the Dak-chowki take this to dak under Dak-Choukis. Under him it became a more permanent institution, used both for

163 Palseart-op-cit. P-58.

164 Ain-I-P-314.

165 Tuzuk-I.P-387.

166 Otean.op-cit, PP -75-77.

167 Manucci, op-cit. Vol. I, P 65, Vol-II, P-467.

168 *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, Nizamuddin Per. Text, p. 171.

military and civil purposes. News reached Sultain in the mornings and afternoons and he controlled the movement of his armies like a game of chess.¹⁶⁹ Mostly he followed the same method or principal used by Allauddin Khiljee regarding market control. Sher Shah was perhaps the first ruler having made successful arrangements of postal system or Dak- Chauki. In every sarai, at every two kos the horses were kept for carrying news. News reached through spies also, who utilized the services of the Dak Chowkis. This was the origin of the spies in News Department of the Mughals.¹⁷⁰

It was the basis of the beginning of the Mughal post system Hussain Taftdar, an important officer during Shers Shah's reign, made a journey from Gaur to Chittore, a distance of 500 Kos in a great emergency. He covered 50 Kos per day and rode very hard e.g. day and night or while asleep, the carriers ran with the bed and while awake, rode on the horse back. Once, on an emergency, rode from Gour to Chittor and covered a distance of 500 kos, of this 50 kos was travelled per day, and rode on day and night. "While asleep, the carriers ran with the bed and while awake, rode on the horse back". Shers Shah besides having 3400 horses had engaged 5000 elephants for bringing news of his dominions consisting of 113000 villages. His motto was "those who keep all news are the custodians of king's confidence; they are beloved of their protectors (wings)".

Akbar established posts throughout the Mughal empire, having two horses and a set of footmen stationed at every 5 kos. They were employed to convey letters on ordinary business from the court and four thousand runners were in his permanent employment, some of whom, on extraordinary occasions, performed a journey of 700 kos in ten days. In the times of *Jahangir*, the private messengers, were obtained in the chief marts and were known as Bazar qasids. The time regularized for journey from Agra to Patna was 13 days. The same policy seems to have been followed in the reigns of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb. Sarkar gives a graphic account of the system in his Mughal Administration.¹⁷¹

169 Ibid, (Farishta), p. 187.

170 *Tarikh-i-Badayuni*, Per Text, p. 521.

171 Sarkar Jagdish Narain, *Orissa and Mir Jumla*, Indian History Congress 1949, p.297.

Private post was either entrusted to these agencies or in some special cases dispatched through special runners. Howkins has been found to mention the complaint he lodged against Muquarib Khan, the Governor of Surat, had been reported to Jahangir as he was expected to come to Agra. Again from Agra Howkins sent a letter for Jahangir through runner regarding the arrival of English ship at Surat.¹⁷² Badayuni refers to a regular correspondence and even transmission of parcels between him and his friend Sheikh Yaqus of Kashmir. Many such instances can be multiplied which exhibit the existence of regular post arrangements.

THE SUFIS AND INTELLECTUALS: The role of Sufis and intellectuals in the development of Postal System was praiseworthy. With the advent of Mughal rule and a growing interest in art, literature and philosophy these networks of intellectuals grew in prominence, while Hindu and Muslim revivalist movements left deep impressions on multitudinous minds. Centres for study and teaching were founded and became popular. The Sufis and other religion's leaders established their deras and khanqahs (men as tries for Sufis) in different parts of the country. For example, the Mahdawis (a movement in the 15th century, believing in the appearance of Mahdi) established deras in Gujarat, Bayana and Kalpi, similarly, Mujadd –I –alif Sani ahmed Sirhindi had a great following in Agra, Awadh, Allahabad, Jaunpur, Bihar, Bengal, Punjab, Qandahar and Kabul and, naturally, they had their khanqahs too.¹⁷³ Visitors and disciples brought letters, messages and good wishes from friends and acquaintances. While returning they took back replies and thus the chains of correspondence continued.

A glance at some of the surviving letters of this type gives an indication of how they were delivered. A typical specimen is a collection of the letters of Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi. He belonged to the Nakshbandi Sufi order and claimed to be the Mujaddid –I –alif Sani or Mahdi. Besides his order writings he has left behind a voluminous collection of letters known as Makfubat –I –Imam –I –

172 William Foster, (ed.), *Early Travels in India*, (Indian edition), pp. 113 -14, 123, 143 -144.

173 S.A.A. RIZVI –*Muslim Revivalist Movements in Northern India*, –Laknow, 1965,

Rabbani. he had great followers in many parts of India and was regarded as an eminent sufi. There are fifteen letters in volume one with vogue indications of the name, place and destination of the letters.¹⁷⁴

A Hindi work of the 17th century, *Ardha –Kathanak* gives some indication of the correspondence of the common people and petty traders. Banarsidas also mentions that during his frequent journeys to different parts of the country he was constantly informed of the affairs of his home and family, runners delivered letters to him along the way.¹⁷⁵ Visitors and disciples brought letters, messages and good wishes from friends and acquaintances. While returning, they took back replies and thus the chain of correspondence continued. A general postal system, open to use by all, did not exist, although a postal organization parallel to the imperial one was available. The trade of European merchants and factors depended on efficient communication between different factories and trade centers. Similarly, the surviving voluminous correspondence of nobles, intellectuals, officials and indigenous merchants furnish eloquent examples of the effectiveness of communication between different parts of the country.

SECRET SERVICE: Abul Fazl claims that the office of *Waqia-Navis* was created by Akbar. But prior to him the office had been in existence even in Babur's time. Sher Shah stationed *Waqia-Navis* in important places to report significant events. Under Aurangzeb, the officers of the postal system collaborated closely with those in the imperial service. The postal organisation of the Mughals was developed for use by the emperor, the princes and nobles. As we have seen, the *dak-chawkis* were solely at the imperial command. *Farmans*, petitions, reports, intelligence, messages, treasure, fruit and valuables were conveyed to the emperor through *dak-chawkis*. Only the emperor was entitled to use them.

MANSABDARS AND NOBLES: The messengers were employed on a permanent basis by Mansabdars and Nobles. They were divided into two classes; swift and ordinary. Particularly, swift runners were held in reserve by important Mansabdars for use in emergencies, while ordinary messengers were

174 Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi, *Maktubat –I –Imam*, Rabbani –Lahore –(n.d.) pp -243, 425.

175 R.C. Sharma. Op. cit. I –p -66.

employed for conveying general messages, invitations and letters of less importance.

Foreign factors, travellers and traders regularly used hired messengers. In 1613, Nicholas Withington, an English traveller and an employee of the East India Company, hired a pattamar and sent him to Lahribander in Sind to investigate and report on its commercial conditions. Withington intended to go there and he wanted some prior knowledge of the area. A pattamar was not only a fast runner but also when necessary, a good spy.¹⁷⁶ Similarly, the surviving voluminous correspondence of nobles, intellectuals, officials and indigenous merchants furnishes eloquent examples of the effectiveness of communication between different parts of the country.

ROLE OF SARAIS IN MUGHAL INDIA: Sarai was an important institution of medieval Indian society. There existed a large number of Sarai structures, surviving from medieval period, all over the country, many of which deserve classification as historical monument. As matter of such medieval structures as comprise rectangular enclosures with one or two gateways and a row of almost identical cells fronted by porches running along the four sides in the interior, may safely be identified as sarais.

The institution of Sarai seems to have played an important role in the growth of economic life of Mughal India. For assessing the significance of its role in this respect a proper understanding of the actual working of the institution is essential which calls for an enquiry into the organizational set up of the sarais. The sarai is an ancient Indian Institution, having existed in one form to another form immorality. *Sarai*, a Persian word, meaning a place, but in India, sarai, is a building for the accommodation of travellers with their pack animals; consisting of an enclosed Yard with a chamber round". The building of sarais was an old institution of Muslim rulers all over the Islamic World. But English travellers Edward Terry's observations is that, the sarai were mainly a place to stay overnight, or for a day or so. For a small payment the man in- charge of the sarai

176 Early Travels, p. 209.

would also undertake cooking.¹⁷⁷ According to Manrique, for the protection of highwaymen, from climatic inclemency, measure was taken to get these routes secured by building sarai.¹⁷⁸ These sarais were furnished with the lodging, wells, mosques, muezzins' imams; separate boards for Muslims and Hindus, and fodder for their animals. The charges at these sarais were nominal.¹⁷⁹

According to Tarikh –I – Firiz Shai, Sarais (Inns), were also the station of dak – chaukis (Mail - Stages). Two government horses were kept ready in each sarai for carrying persons and dispatches, by dak – chaukis news reached them everyday even from the remotest corner. Akbar improved upon Sher Shah's system and established throughout his dominions two horses and several runners at every fifth Kos. Whenever a royal firman, a letter from a noble reached a Chauki, it was immediately dispatched to the next Chauki by a rider. Sher Shah made some laudable efforts in building roads and constructing sarais (Inns) for travellers and the government officers for the comfort and convenience of the travellers. The sarais were constructed at a distance of every two Kos. These sarais were the veritable arteries of the empire and had provision for the stay of Hindus and Muslims.¹⁸⁰ According to Abbas Khan, in the middle of every Sarai was a well and a Jama – Maszid of burnt brick; and Sher shah placed an Imam and a Muazzin in every Mosque, together with Shahna and several Nigahban (watchmen) and the land grant (Madad - I- Maaash) to each one of them was located in the vicinity of the sarais were given meals and fodder for horses and bullocks to everyone who came on behalf of the state. Every sarai contained a market for business transactions (Barai Kharid- Wa- Farokhat). According to Ferishta, 50 Kurohs were thus covered in 24 hours. A letter reached Ahmadabad and Gujrat a distance about 500 miles in five days.¹⁸¹ Nikitin, the Russian traveller, travelling in 1470 in India, found sarais where the

177 Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East Indies*, pp. 393-394.

178 Abbas Khan Sarvani p. 220.

179 Elliot and Dowson (Eng. Trans.) *History of India as told by His Historians, Tarikh-I-Firoza Shai*, Vol. III, Indian Reprint, p.203.

180 Elliot and Dowson (Eng. Tram) *History of India As Told By His Historians. Or Tarikh –I – Firoz Shai – Vol. III India, Reprint*, p – 203.

181 Elliot and Dowson (Eng. Tram) *History of India As Told By His Historians. Or Tarikh –I – Firoz Shai – Vol. III India, Reprint*, p – 203.

landlady cooked and looked after the welfare of the travellers; is an evidence that the class of Inn - keeper existed before the time of Sher shah.¹⁸² Some sarais were established by the emperors, and maintained by them. Others were built by the Queens, Princes and prominent nobles who were usually maintained by the servants of royal households. Rich Philanthropists and traders also did not lag behind.¹⁸³ Sarais were usually of two types; in smaller and unimportant towns or in villages, they were not luxurious, were mostly built of mud and straw and were mainly used for emergency overnight stay.¹⁸⁴ These sarais were looked after, permanently, by resident couples and were found even in the very remote parts of the country.

The second type of sarai was more spacious, and provided sufficient facilities for travellers. One of its example still stands in Delhi, near the Tomb of Humayun, and is known as Arab Sarai, Built by Akbar's Mother, Haji Begum, in 1560, it accommodated 300 persons. Pelsaert states that Nurjahan, built many expensive sarais in all parts of the country.¹⁸⁵

Once Peter Mundy stayed in *Nur mahal Ki Sarai*, two mile from Agra. He described it as a fair and large establishment, built of stone, accommodating about 3,000 people and 500 horses. All the rooms were arched and each was roofed with several couples. There was a beautiful garden on either side.¹⁸⁶ Peter Mundy also saw another magnificent sarai at chaparaghata. There was an imposing castle like structure at least 1,000 men could obtain rooms each with a lock and key.¹⁸⁷ *The Sarai of Saib Khan*, resembled those of a modern hotel. A traveller or merchant could rent room on a monthly basis and storage was also available. This type of sarai was found in big cities, and was ideal for foreign travellers.¹⁸⁸ Bernier praised highly the Begum sarai in Delhi, built by Jahan Ara Begum, daughter of Shahjahan. Impressed by the design, utility and grandeur,

182 Major, R.H. (ed.), *India In The 15th Century*, Haklayat Society, 1857,. P – 10.

183 Pelsaert, F. *Jahangirs India (Tr. Moreland and Geyl)*, Cambridge. 1925, p – 50.

184 Peter Mundy, *The Traveles Of Peter Mundy In Europe and Asia*, 1608 – 1667. Edited By Richard C. Temple, Vol. I., Hakluyat Society London, 1914. p-159.

185 Pelsaert, op. cit., p – 50.

186 Mundy II, pp – 78-79.

187 Early Traveles Of William Finch, Account. , p -179.; Also Johannes De Laet., p – 89.

188 Mundy II, p -159.

rich merchants could live in perfect comfort there. He writes: - If in Paris we had a score of similar structures, distributed in different parts of the city, strangers on their first arrival, would be less embarrassed than at present to find a safe and reasonable lodging. They might remain in them a few days until they had seen their acquaintance and looked out at leisure for more convenient apartments. Such places would become warehouse for all kinds of merchandise and the general resort of foreign merchants.¹⁸⁹

Peter Mundy, Manucci, Abbe-carre, Manrique and Tavernier gave a graphic picture of the sarais. The sarais could, usually, accommodate 700 to 1000 or even more persons with their horses, camels and carriages. In these sarais, security would be provided to the Travellers and traders against thieves and robbers. Their gates were daily closed before sunset and opened in the morning.¹⁹⁰ These views of Mannuci are corroborated by Peter Mundy.¹⁹¹ Manrique also writes that from Patna to Agra and Agra to Lahore, there existed a network of such caravan sarais. These were usually built by Emperors and wealthy persons as an act of pity.¹⁹² According to Tavernier, "Wherever the word sera occur, it signifies a great enclosure of walls or hedges, within which 50 or 60 thatched huts are arranged all around. Here some men and women, who sell flour, rice, butter and vegetables, were make it there business to prepare bread and cooked rice."¹⁹³

A sarai of Jahangir's reign is located near Aram Bagh in Agra. Peter Mundy describes the sarai located on the left Bank of the Jamuna in the following words: "I departed from our house in Agra, being in the street called pullhuttee (Phal-hatti, fruit and vegitable market), and crossing over the river, came to Noor Mahal Ki Sarai. Which is very fair one built by the Queen (Nur-Jahan) to accommodate the travellers, in which may stand 500 horse, and there

189 Bernier, pp – 280-81 Della Valle, p – 95. and Manrique II, pp -99-100.

190 Mannuci, op-cit Vol-I, PP-68-69.

191 Peter Mundy, op-cit, Vol. II. PP 49-50.

192 Manrique-op-cit. Vol. II. P. 100.

193 Tavernier op-cit, Vol. I. P.45. Abbe-Carre op-cit, Vol. II P. 317.

may conveniently lying 3000 people”.. Peter Mundy states that both the gardens flanking Nur Mahal’s Sarai were ‘built’ by Nur-Jahan herself.¹⁹⁴

ADMINISTRATIVE & SUBORDINATE STAFF: The official administering the sarais was known as Shahna or Shiqdar, and the office of this official is known as Khana –I –Bashahi.¹⁹⁵ The chief official of a Sarai was apparently assisted by a subordinate staff comprising two kinds of personal Viz. (a) The service staff also divided into two categories; primarily of cooks and (b) The watchmen and the gatekeepers. From a 17th century account we find that for persons responsible for the opening and closing of gates of the sarais the special designation of Darbans was used. General staff (II) Brahmans meant to serve the non Muslim travellers only.¹⁹⁶ Functionaries attached to the Mosque in the sarai were known as Muezzin meant for making required improvement in the Mosque for the revenue grant attached to it. Manucci also said that Sher shah bought a number of married slaves and appointed them and their wives as attendants in his Sarais. It is possible that the Bhatiyaras were their descendants.¹⁹⁷ By the number of accounts of travellers of 17th century, it appears that the service of staff in a Sarai comprised one particular caste group known as Bhatiyaras. The Bhatiyaras claims descent from Salim Shah. The Bhatiyaras were usually Muslims. The work of cooking and cleaning of rooms etc. was mainly performed by the female members of Bhatiyara families settled in the Sarais. Caste law and taboos made it difficult for Hindus to prepare food for everyone. But Muslims were not included in such restrictions.¹⁹⁸

Manucci writes “In every (sarai) there is an official whose duty is to close the gates at the going down of the sun. After he had shut the gates, he calls out to everyone must look after his belongings, pocket and horses. “At six o’ clock in the morning before opening the gates, the watchmen gave three warnings to the travellers, crying in a loud voice that every one must look after his own

194 *The Travels of Peter Mundy* (ed) R.C. Temple, Vol –II, p -89.

195 *Bernier Travels in The Mughal Empire*, pp-360-63.

196 *Proceeding Of The IHC, 39th Session Osmania University Hyderabad.*, 1978, Vol. I, p-466.

197 Manucci II, p-116.

198 Crooke, W., op.cit. II, p-36.

things. After these warnings if anyone suspects that any of his property is missing the doors are not opened until the lost thing is found. By this means they made sure of catching the thief, and he is strung up opposite the Sarai.¹⁹⁹ The officer Shahna or Shiqdar not only regulated the entry and the exit of the travellers but also looked after their safety. It was, obviously, his responsibility to prevent thefts and other crimes inside the sarai. This official apparently, also enjoyed wide ranging powers including those of inflicting punishments for crimes committed within the compound of the sarai. He was also expected to collaborate with the state authorities in tracking criminals and other undesirable elements staying inside the Sarais. It was his duty to promptly bring to the notice of the relevant authority the death of any traveller during his stay at the Sarai so that the goods or belongings left behind by him could be taken into custody of the state for the final disposal.²⁰⁰ In the towns and Pargana headquarters, the local authorities Viz. the Kotwals and Shiqdars respectively had powers to visit sarais for investigations and making arrests or maintaining law and order.

Edward Terry observed that the saris were mainly a place to stay overnight or for a day or so for a small payment the man in charge of the sarai would also undertake cooking.²⁰¹ As Inn keepers the Bhatiyaras sold firewood, Tobacco and other articles they would purchase any item a lodger required and further increase their income by hiring out bullocks and carts.²⁰² Their wives the Bhatiyarins, cleaned the rooms, provided cooked food, drinking water and warm water for washing; supplied cots, mattress, sheets if they needed; and waited on guests as if they were their own servants,²⁰³ Hindus, usually, paid those one or two paise per day and Muslims twice a month, because Bhatiyaras cooked for them.²⁰⁴

Manrique gives a vivid description of the service staff in the sarais: "these attendants are called respectively Meters and Meteranis. Their business is to

199 Manucci., *Storia Do Mogor*. Tr. William Irvine., Vol. I, p-67.

200 Manucci, op., cit., p-69.

201 Peter Mundy., p-311.

202 Crooke, W.II, p-116.

203 Manucci I, p-116.

204 Peter Mundy II, p- 121.

keep these rooms (of the sarais) free from rubbish and clean and provided with cots... those servants are also entrusted with the preparation of the food for guests as well doing all the other duties essential to comfort within the house, even to providing hot water for washing feet. Besides their duties if the guests have horses, they are required to cooked mung or chick and Pea".²⁰⁵ Sarai provided employment for artisans and people of other occupations, generating in seasons a constant demand for the services of Barbers, Washermen, Farriers, Tailors, Musicians, Dancing boys and girls, Astrologers, Physicians, and many others. They were meeting places for the people of many occupations, traders and craftsmen listed above, adventures and sometimes thieves and cheats.²⁰⁶ Akbar also built various new sarais all over his realm,²⁰⁷ and once ordered that in the sarais on high roads, free food and lodging should be provided to those who could not pay their way.²⁰⁸

Extensive, efficient and economical means of transport and communication are the signs for a social, economic and cultural development, particularly, in the hilly areas. Till recently, the means of transport were meager and people had to rely on bridle paths, human and animal transport. Consequently, the areas remained backward economically and socially. The area though rich in resources, is backward for the only reason that it has lacked terribly in proper transport system from times immemorial. Roads are, therefore, essential to all round progress.

205 Manrique, op., cit., vol. II, pp- 100-101.

206 Manucci I, p-116.

207 *Ain II* (J). pp- 43-44.

208 *Akbarnama -III*, p-1236.

CHAPTER – 5

URBAN ECONOMY

Urban settlements are the generating centre of socio-economic synthesis. These emerge as a result of their historical changes, exploitation of natural resources and wide variety of human activities carried out in the agrarian and non-agrarian sectors in a certain span of time. The medieval technology indicates three such categories of urban settlements based on their size. These are *shahars*, *balda* and *qasba*. Urban history scholars have identified their multifunctional role, interdependence on rural economy, factors for their emergence, growth and decline and finally the contribution in the development of the economy of the region.¹ The reason behind the origin of urban settlement is based on the development of economy and better use of natural resources.

According to Abul Fazl “people that are attached to the world will collect in times, without which there would be no progress” city life was of immense importance during Mughal period. A noted French Historian (Fernand Braudel), of modern times has rightly commented that “towns are like electric transforms they increase tension accelerate the rhythm of exchange and constantly recharge human life towns generate expansive and are themselves generated by it”

The process of the growth of towns became rapid during 16th and 17th centuries and continued till the middle of 18th century. There is uncertainty among scholars regarding the size of the town but probably it depends on the population factor. The basic feature is the existence of a market, the smallest town is Qasba.²

1 H K Naqvi, *Urbanisation and Urban Centres Under the Great Mughals*, Shimla, 1971, pp.1-7.

2 Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalization 15 -18th century*, Delhi (N. D.), Introduction, pp 3 -4.

The smallest town (Qasba) had the features of the village life: Agricultural production, and a market. According to P. Saran there was a hierarchy of town from the humble Qasba to the district (sarkar), headquarter where the Fauzdar resided, the provincial and imperial towns like Agra, Delhi, Lahore etc. The estimated view of the traveler Ralph Fitch regularly endorsed by various modern Historians like J. N. Sarkar, K. M. Ashraf, I. P. Gupta and Irfan Habib etc. are hold that in Akbar's time there were 120 big cities and 3200 townships or rural towns. They also expressed that, in the 17th century, the largest city was Agra with an estimated population of 500,000, which rose to 600,000 when the emperor was in the town. It still remained very large when court shifted back to Delhi in the middle of 17th century. According to Coryat, Lahore was higher than Agra and was "one of the largest cities of the whole universe", Ahmadabad was estimated to be larger than London, and its subah's, Patna, we are noted had a population of 200,000, other large towns were Golconda, Dacca, Rajmahal, Thatta, Burhanpur, Masoulipatam etc. He was supported by Terry (1616 -19) and also by Monserrate (1581) who asserted Lahore to be "Second to none either in Asia or in Europe. Coryat (1615) described Lahore to be one of the largest cities of the whole universe" as exceeding Constantinople "in greatness".³

The relevance of urban studies in Mughal India becomes apparent when we consider urban development under the Mughal rule during the 16th and 17th century. In this period, a large number of cities in India came into prominence. They need to be studied objectively and in detail so as to assess their role in different spheres of life during the history of the Period.

Throughout the period of our study there were certain prominent reasons or theories as enumerated by "different historians" –for the settlement, growth and prosperity of Urban centers: especially small (Qusbas) and big cities. Mostly four distinct reasons have been given below for the existence of the cities. First, there were cities whose prime function was administrative where other roles, such as manufacturing or religion were of secondary importance. These were cities such as Agra, Delhi, Lahore, as well as many provincial Capitals. Later,

3 J.N. Sarkar, *Studied in Economic Life in Mughal India*, p-208

Poona, Faizabad, Haidrabad emerged as important centers of this type. Secondly, there were cities which had a predominantly commercial and manufacturing character to which may be attached some administrative functions. Cities such as Patna, and Ahmadabad fell in this category. Thirdly, there were the pilgrim centres where some trade and craft activities also flourished, but which had a large floating population. Cities such as Banaras and Mathura, Kanchi and Tirumalai in South India fall in this category. Ajmer was well-known religious and administrative centre. Lastly, there were centres which rise to prominence due to manufacturing technique o skill of the local population. Just as for textiles and Indigo production :Bayana Ahmadabad, Broch, Cambay, Kasimbazar, Khairabad Coromandel coast etc.rose to dizzy heights and we find the most of them were flooded with the foreigners for their procurement and shipment for Europe.⁴

Contemporary literature and other evidences give an idea of urban occupation and crafts during the Mughal period. The crafts and the persons associated with it seems to be of the types, those engaged in productive works like, pullers, smiths carpenters weavers etc and others like washermen, barbers, garland-makers and so on. Majority of them depended on towns for their livelihood and survival.. Various factors were responsible for the development of towns in Mughal India. For the transformation of agricultural communities into urban, the transition from the *Qasba* to the *Shahar* and from the village to township in which trade was the predominant factor.⁵

By the beginning of the sixteenth century, on the eve of Mughal conquest, the level of urbanization in India had never been greater. Except population, the city also influenced the social, economic and cultural life of the country. During the Mughal period, the largest towns became “thriving centre of manufacturing, marketing, banking and entrepreneurial activities. Intersections in a network of communications by land and water which crossed and re -crossed the sub-

4 Satish Chandra, *Medieval India Part twoMughal empire (1526 -1748)*, Delhi. 1999. p. 366

5 J N Sarkar. *Studied in Economic Life in Mughal India*, p-209

continent and extended far beyond South East Asia to the Middle East to Western Europe and elsewhere".⁶

PART -A

MARKETING AGENCIES

The village community was an important element in the economic set up of the country. W.W. Hunter Writes: In India the simple system of village economy is entirely based upon the dealings of the village Mahajan, sometimes the fashion to decay as a usurer but who was often the only thrifty person among an improvident population. His rate of interest was high, it was only proportionate to the risks of his business⁷ As the Muslim religion prohibits taking of interest, the village money lender who deals chiefly in grain and spices, must have been from amongst the Hindus. However, the banjaras and other traders were working as middlemen to carry produce over long distances on the routes. In Mughal India, a majority of the population lived in the villages. The inter-regional and intra-local trade was carried out through the rural markets. At least one Moselem official was incharge of the sale of *fowl, sheep, pigeons* etc.

Many of the largest Village Parganas and Thana headquarters were, gradually, transformed into towns. Although they, generally, presented a village skyline, from the fourteenth century they were significant centres for various crafts, mercantile and commercial transactions. "By the seventeenth century, the number of the occupational caste groups, such as weavers, goldsmiths, carpenters, blacksmith, dyers, potters, and shoemakers, had grown so large in many towns that they lived and worked in separate streets"⁸ Bernier's testimony is quite impressive when he says that Bania was the hub of qusba or village market.

During the Mughal period, Village and Qusbas of different regions specialized for their local products, which they exported to other parts of the

⁶ Gabin Hambly , *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Vol. I.

⁷ W W Hunter, *Indian Empire*, P 65

⁸ S.A.A.Rizvi, *The Wonder That was India*, Vol, II London 1987 pp., 74- 75

country. Sind specialized for cotton textiles, silk, wooden-articles, ivory bangles, and saltpeter; Kashmir was the centre of silk materials, paper and woolen articles as shawls and blankets. The introduction of the Iranian vertical loom into Kashmir and elsewhere in the fourteenth century stepped up both the quality and quantity of carpet production. Gujarat excelled in the art of weaving gold and silk threads into brocade, velvet, gauze, needlework and embroidery in a variety of textures and dyes. Medicinal products, jewellery, furniture and weapons were also produced in Gujarat. Punjab was a centre of cotton textiles, blankets and paper. Delhi and Agra region were known for their paper manufacturing, glassware and copper & brass utensils. Jaunpur was famous for cloth-weaving and wooden articles; Awadh produced saltpeter; Bihar was known for its glass vessels and wooden articles; and Bengal specialized in Muslin, cotton textiles and silk weaving. Similarly Agra, and coromondal coast and Gujarat were famous for supplying Indigo to European traders and Middle Eastern countries.⁹

MANDIS MARKET AND TOWNS

The extent and organization of the market depends upon agricultural produce because these are, naturally, essential for the growth and development of an agrarian economy. The high level of agrarian taxation and the cash nexus in combination ensured that the peasants would have to sell much of their produce in order to pay the land revenue.¹⁰ Local trade involved the sale of crops for the payment of land revenue and to feed the towns which were growing in size or number. The Mandis in big villages serve as the base; the provincial capital was the focal point. Bigger deals in commodities were made in special market towns or Mandis which also served as convenient media of exchange for the surplus of corn or goods produced in the vicinity.

PRODUCING CENTRE: During this period the towns of Hindustan was the nerve centers of commercialization and craft. The raw material was supplied by the hinterland and market. Since the 13th century, several new industries had been introduced e.g. paper, silk, wool and leather. But in all cases the technique

9 *Letters Received*, Vol, III, p.8. English Factories, Taverniers Travels,

10 *Op., cit.*, Cambridge Economic History of India, vol -I., p -183.

of production was old, except in spinning, weaving and production of cotton goods. The producing centers of that period were, *Samana, Sultanpur, Saharanpur, Sirohi, Nagor, Jaunpur, Sarkhej or Sehwan* where one or more than one commodity was manufactured. These towns simply traded their surplus wares which kept them going as their substantial margin of profit. Some urban centers emerge as carrying on the industrial production side by side with brisk commercial traffic. They became popular because of their dual economic activities, like *Lahore, Multan, Agra, Benaras, Burhanpur, Ahmadabad, Cambay*. By virtue of their commercial character these towns had acquired much more wealth, resilience and even endurance.¹¹

The last class of town was the trading or commercial town. They owed their importance due to their peculiar position along the trade routes and confluence of important rivers. Mirzapur, owing to its situation at the highest navigable point at the Ganges, had a prosperous trade with Bengal and central India. This class of town was not very numerous.

After 1498, Arabian dominance in Indian Ocean and Red Sea was challenged by the European powers. The Portuguese, the English, the Dutch and others penetrated India through her Sea frontier. The History of modern commerce began in India as in Europe. New markets grew for India's raw material and manufacturers. For a time, India supplied the whole world with several articles, through traditional seaports like Broach, Surat and Cambay. Similarly, we find the sind ports and the ports of Bengal like Rajmahal etc. were flourished.

AGRA

Urban studies have evoked keen interest in recent times as cities have played an important role in the growth of communities and in evolving cultural trends of the cities and cities. The city of Agra has been selected for this study because of several reasons. However, Agra was an important city as well as

¹¹ H. K. Naqvi, *Urbanisation and Urban Centers Under the Great Mughals*, Simla, 1971, pp-365-66

capital of Northern India. This city was well connected with other provinces of the country and was renowned for its productivity and availability of various kinds of goods and other institutions which emerged due to vast patronage and other useful contribution. Firstly it remained diversified in its functions. Its growth as a city really began when it was rediscovered and developed to a great pitch by Emperor Akbar, as a particular type of the Mughal city; it remained the capital of the Mughal Empire for about seven decades. Secondly, it was not only an important city of Mughal India during the period under investigation, but it was also one of the leading cities of the contemporary world because of its phenomenal growth, expansion, commerce, trade and grandeur. Thirdly, its location in the heart of the Empire provided multidirectional communication links with other important cities, ports and regions of the country, and served effectively as the nerve –centre of all major political, administrative cum military, social, cultural and economic activities. Obviously, it played a major role in the History of Mughal India. Royal families along with high officials rendered useful service here than any other city. The middle class and other section of society flocked to the city because of its immense employment potential. Large number of foreigners and high dignitaries visited it and large section of people who migrated from central Asian countries preferred to settle down here. The city still enjoys a high reputation in the tourist map of the world due to its splendid monuments better known as the Taj Mahal a tear in the Marble, which suppresses all other in its magnificent artistry and can justly be called the most precious jewel of the country.

Emperor Akbar, was not only aware of the significance of towns and cities but seems to have been quite ahead of his times in giving impetus to the process of urbanization. So the Agra city was particularly developed by him and he made it one of the most advanced Mughal cities of India. So, proper planned walled city was started by Him. Abul Fazl, says that the fort was constructed in the year A.D. 1565 at a cost of Rs.35, 00000 in fifteen years under the supervision of chief Engineer Qasim Khan, and about four thousand skilled masons were

employed.¹² Many types of buildings were constructed here like residential complexes, a network of streets, bazaars, chauks, mosques, gardens, orchards and sarais. The city began as full –fledged urban unit.¹³ Abul Fazl further mentions in the context of Agra that the Emperor Akbar “embellished it and thus a matchless city has arisen. It prospered very rapidly and merchants from distant parts of India and foreign flocked to it”.¹⁴

The chief factors contributing to the development of Agra as a magnificent and great city were the wealth accumulated here from its extensive commerce, trade, industries and the royal patronage granted to it. An impressive socio – cultural infrastructure of the city emerged at the end of the 16th century. It was so populous that it was considered much greater than the city of London.¹⁵

The basic principle which governed the layout of the city was the desire to get the maximum military and security advantages because it could be used as the Imperial seat of the Mughal Empire. The social, economic, religious and cultural needs of the different sections of society had to be adequately fulfilled by provided them residential complex for the nobility and the officials, public buildings, places for education, social gatherings, festivities, worship, sports and recreation etc.

Aesthetic value was another important aspect kept in mind. The sites for impressive mausoleums, tombs, Id-gah, sarais, pleasure gardens attached to pleasure places and burial grounds were allocated far away from the main city. Foreigners were also allowed to make a residential complex named, Padari Tota, and even construct a church, and a college.¹⁶ For economic development, the city had great opportunities as it was located on several important highways, which provided facilities to merchants from far and wide to their direct trade. Its Imperial Karkhana’s attracted the people of various places to settle here for

12 Abul Fazl, *Ain –I –Akbari*, I (Trans.) Blochmann, ed. S.L. Goomer, Delhi -1965, p-412.

13 *Akbarnama* –II, pp -117 -18., *Ain –II*, p -191.

14 *Ain –II*, p -191.

15 Ralph Fitch, *The First Englishman in India* ed. J.H. Ryley –London 1899. S. Nurul Hasan, ‘Agra’ *Encyclopaedia of Islam* –London -1960 -1, pp -252 -53.

16 Edward Maclagan, *The Jesuits and The Great Mughal*, London. 1932. p -313.

occupations. The residence of military guards gave, it a touch of distinctive grandeur. Father Monserrate calls it, 'a city within a city',¹⁷ it was mentioned as, the most famous structure of the world.¹⁸

City gates were viz. Madar, Chaharsu, Nim, Puttu, and Nuri,¹⁹ functioned as check post for the main highways of the city.²⁰ The centre of the city served with a network of commercial and manufacturing establishments, known as the hub of urban life. Its Streets were interconnected with the main commercial and residential zones of the city. The main roads were made strong and using various material for road building for trade and commerce and carrying heavy traffic, especially, connecting the city with Fatehpur Sikri and Sikandra in 1585²¹ during the Akbar's reign. Ralph Fitch described the large streets of Agra, and William Finch (AD.1611) corroborated his account²²

Some important markets²³, in Akbar's time, were situated towards the West, the North, and near the fort. Nakhas is mentioned as a very large market where horses, camels, oxen, tents, cotton goods and many other things were sold.²⁴ William Finch also made a mention of a gate of the fort opening into this bazaar.²⁵

There was a regular supply of water, good communication links and support of its rich hinterland. Besides it was well situated to provide the strategic and administrative needs of the Empire. It became the 'Model city' of the Mughals and its reputation was enhanced by its establishment as the capital of the Mughal Empire. Agra was also famous for inland trade white cloths, silk

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- 17 F. Monserrate, *The Commantry of Father Monserrate*, Tr. J.S. Hoyland and Annotated by S.N. Banerjee Cuttack. 1922, p -34.
 - 18 Francisco, Pelsaert, *Remonstratie* Tr. W.H. Moreland and P. Geyl Jahangir's India. Cambridge. 1925, p -3
 - 19 Pelsaert, pp -1 -3.
 - 20 Nicholo Manucci, *Storia do Mogaor*, 1653 -1708. Tr. W. Irvine, Vol.I, 1907 -08 p –132.
 - 21 Op., cit., Ralph Fitch, p -102
 - 22 Finch. W., observation of William Finch, Merchant; Purchas. Vol. IV Glasco 1905. p-72
 - 23 Jean de Thevenot, *Relation de l' Indostan*, ed. S. N. Sen, in the Indian travels of Thevenot and Careri. Delhi, 1949, p -60
 - 24 Op. cit. Pelsaert, p -4
 - 25 Finch. p -72

stuffs, lac, gold and silver embroideries on turbans and other kinds of cloth, as well as an important centre for its indigo cultivation.

The city became the nucleus of urban institutions and urbanism. Trade and industries prospered here. Revenue in the form of taxes, and surplus from the fields in kind or cash flowed into the royal coffers leading to concentration of wealth and power. City life gave rise to many new pastimes and occupations²⁶.thus, Agra enjoyed a unique position in the annals of Mughal history because of liberal patronage granted by the Mughal emperor

CRAFTS PRODUCTION

The skilled craftsmen and occupational caste groups were also part and parcel of urban growth. By the seventeenth century, the numbers of the occupational caste groups, such as weavers, goldsmiths, carpenters, blacksmiths, dyers, potters, and shoemakers, had grown so large that in many towns they lived and worked in there. This organization is based on caste system except in the case of Muslim Craftsmen. Babur found all the craftsmen were organized in rigid and exclusive castes.²⁷ Similarly, materials discovered from Mughal horizons in the shape of ...Such crafts could flourish well in urban centers only. Although urban economy was dominated by the large number of professionals and craftsmen, who earned more and produced for a wider consumption and circulation: because urban craftsmen were more skilled to manufacture articles for wider consumption. They worked as full timers and this created a specialized class of artisans and craftsmen like weavers, lipid artists, smiths, jewellers, etc in towns.²⁸

There were no factories or big establishment for organized production. Actual producers, usually, lived in small towns or in big villages with transport facilities.

26 I. P. Gupta, *Urban Glimpes of Mughal India* Pub. Discovery 1988 p-1
27 Babur, 520.
28 K.R.K.Sastry, *Indian States* Kitabsdan New Delhi p-1

ROYAL WORKSHOPS AND KARKHANA

The luxury items were, generally, produced in the royal workshops or Karkhanas. The system of royal karkhanas was probably borrowed from Persia though its much earlier existence in India could not be ruled out.²⁹ In Muhammad Tughlaq's karkhanas, four thousand silk workers were employed who wove and embroidered different types of robes of honour and garments.

During this period, there was praiseworthy co-ordination between agriculture and industries. Different types of specialized handicrafts were developed due to the proficiency of the skilled craftsman. Bernier's observations regarding rigid adherence to one's hereditary profession are echoed by Stavorinus. Artificers confine themselves to one single work neither a goldsmith work in silver, nor a silversmith in gold.

BOWS, ARROWS AND BAMBOO: John Marshall found that "Bhagalpur to be a best market for bows -arrows and also 'neat hubble –bubbles' (*hooka*)³⁰ and Tobacco pipe". John Marshall also found Kotgola near "Ghoraghat a popular market of lathis; here 4 big lathis could be purchased. The price of a pice was (1/28 Rupee). But the lathis of Patna, were superior to that of the former. The former would 'never be red through never so much rubbed with ogle'.³¹ Bows and arrows were also found in Lahore.³²

WOOD -WORK: Carpentry was also an important craft. The extensive use of timber was in building material, household furniture, chariots and boats.

The furniture used by the general population was very meagre. Chairs and tables were used at the port towns by the Portuguese, the Dutch, the English and the merchants residing there.³³ The chief manufacturer of wooden

29 Tripta Verma. *Karkhanas under the Mughals from Akbar to Aurangzeb: A Study in Economic Development* (Delhi:, 1994), p. 7.

30 John Marshall, *John Marshall in India, being his Notes and observations*, Edited by S.A Khan London, 1927. p -121, Hobson –Jobson, under Hubble –Bubble and Hooka, pp –322 -326

31 Marshall, p -122.

32 Op. cit. Manucci, p -424

33 Moreland, W.H. *India at the Death of Akbar*, London, 1927, p -162.

articles were stool, bed -stead, chess-board, ink-stand, ornamental boxes and ordinary things of common use.³⁴ Teak, Sesame, Babul and Mango wood was commonly used by the common public. The costly materials were prepared from sandalwood were only and used by Nobles. The state of Gujarat was popular for manufactured ink-stands, boxes, with engravings. De Laet says: 'the poor people have very little furniture and even in the houses of the nobles little furniture was used except in the women's apartments where one may see a great quantity of gold and silver vessels'.³⁵

Boat making or ship building was prevalent in India, right from the ancient times. In the Vedic period Sea was, frequently, used for trade purposes. The Rig Veda mentions "Merchants who crowd the great waters with ships". The Angavijja refers to several kinds of boats, apparently made of timber. These were Nava, Pota, Kottimba, Salika, Tappak, plava, pindika, Kandevelu Dati, etc. A large variety of boats have been mentioned in the contemporary literature such as Alocko (Ulak), Budreroo (Bajra), Purgoo, Boora .³⁶ As many as 29 types of boats are mentioned in the 15th century literature of Bihar and various types of boat were manufactured at Patna either for transport, commercial or military purpose. During Mughal period, travelling by boats, particularly in Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Sind and Gujarat was common. Abul Fazl says that in Bengal "travelling by boats, take place especially in rainy season and they make (Boats) of different kinds and different purposes of carriage or swift sailing. Some boat constructed technically for attacking and capturing purposes.³⁷ The cargoes are put into small ships called Tawaris which transport them to Kambhayat.³⁸ Abul Fazl writes about the Thatta in Sind, that the means of locomotion was boats, either, large and small, that numbering about of 40,000.³⁹ Akbar built many boats some of which were large enough to carry a few elephants.⁴⁰ Abul Fazl says

34 Ibid.

35 John de Laet *Imperio Maguni Mogolis*, Tr. J. S. hoyland, annotated by S. N. Banerji in *The empire of the Great Mogul*, Bombay, 1928. p -89.

36 R. J. Qaisar, "Ship building in the Mughal Empire during the Seventeenth Century", *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, V. 5, 1968, pp. 156-58.

37 Abul Fazl, *Ain-I-Akbari*, Vo1.II, translated by H.S. Jarret, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1891. p -134.

38 Ibid, 248.

39 Ibid, p -339.

40 *Akbar The Great Vol. I*, p -159.

that, ships built in Allahabad and Lahore was used in River Ganges and Ravi respectively. Kashmir was famous for ships of artistic design. These Boats known as Patell, Boras, Pargoes Palwars, were used for carrying saltpetre from Patna, down to Hugli. The local boats (Ghurab) also were adapted for military purpose by equipping these with artillery and gunners⁴¹ Moreland found that the manufacture of land vehicle was less important in Akbar's time. During the 16th century, small boats were built for the coasting trade from Bengal to as far as Sind. As He admits" the great bulk of the commerce in Indian seas was carried in ships built in India and most of these large one's were constructed on the West coast. The construction of the passenger ships was also in progress for the pilgrim voyage to the red sea. A few carracks were built by the Portuguese at Bassein also.⁴²

With the discovery of the sea route to the east India became the centre of the commercial activities of several European nations. We find that there was considerable coastal trade activity going on during the 17th century. The advent of the English and the Dutch on Gujarat coast introduced an element of competition, both in the coastal as well as in the foreign land. In the first quarter of the 17th century, the Europeans concentrated more on the smaller crafts of the Western coast. J. O. Ovington an English Chaplin, who visited Surat in 1690, was highly impressed to see the skill of the Indians in ship-building and found that they could, successfully, carry out the imitation of the Europeans and even out-shave them by their skills at times. He further suggested that timber used by the Indians for making ship as so strong that it would not crack even by the force of a timber 'to help them in war'. Indian teak stood better than the English technique of constructing ships and quickly adopted it. Ain makes a mention of ships of Bengal and Thatta, along ocean coasts, south coast and west coast, large ships with suitable dockyards were constructed and even repaired for Ocean voyages. Lahore and Allahabad were also important centres of ship building industry. Akbar enjoyed ride from Agra to Allahabad and from Delhi to Agra. In Bengal, travelling by boats was mostly done in rainy Basin. According to

41 Ain –II Tr (J&S) p -164 -65; Manrique, p -135.

42 Ibid, p -159.

Chahar Gulshan there were about 4200 big and 4400 small boats in Bengal alone.⁴³ By the middle of the 17th century Surat became an import centre for ship building and repairing. The English company had very successfully constructed and even re-fitted many damaged ships. There was brisk trade activity between Bengal and various parts of the country. Balasore, in Orissa, had a regular trade with Bengal. It was also known as ship-building and ship-repairing centre with suitable dockyards. It developed further after the advent of the Europeans, particularly the English. Abul Fazl says that, ships were built in Allahabad and Lahore for use in the Ganges and the Ravi respectively. Kashmir was famous for ships of artistic design.⁴⁴ According to Thomas Bowery, "Purgon" was another type of boat which was mostly used between Hugli and Balasore. These boats were again made very strong in order to carry 'sufficient load" They were also used to loading ship as they were constructed in such a way as could, remain in water for a long time without being damaged or destroyed.⁴⁵ 'Boora' was comparatively a light boat which rowed with 29 or 30 oars. These boats were also used for carrying Saltpatre and other commodities from Hugli downwards. Ralph Fitch (158-91) journeyed to Satgoan in Bengal from Agra, with one hundred and forty boats, laden with different sorts of merchandize. At Satgoan he found a great assemblage of vessels. He also makes a mention of peculiar type of boat known as Pericose, which had 24 to 26 Oars and went from place to place to bring rice or other commodities.⁴⁶

Hamilton has given an account of baots carrying saltpetre from Patna to Hugli. These were fifty yards long, five yards broad and two and a half yard deep and could carry above 200 tons of load.⁴⁷ These were probably 'patellas' referred

43 Rai Chaturman, *Chahar Gulshan*, extract. Tr. By J. N. Sarkar, *India of Aurangzeb*. p -40.

44 Abul Fazl, *Ain-I-Akbari*, You, translated by H.Blochmann, Delhi 1964 (Reprint). p -144.

45 Thomas Bowery, *A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal* Edited by Richard Carnac Temple, Cambridge, 1905. p.288.

46 The Early Travels in India, p. 18

47 Alexander Hamilton, *Voyages and Travels*, ed. John Pinkerton, V, VIII, London 181, p. 414.

to by Marshall and Bowrey as having a capacity to carry four to five thousand Bengal maunds.⁴⁸ Due to favourable physical situation,

SHELL AND CORAL: Tipperah merchants purchased tortoise shell and sea-shell at Patna for manufacturing bracelets and other toys. Coral was another important item of trade. It was in good demand from ancient times. Kautilya mention several handmade varieties of coral. After the English arrival in India, they became anxious in securing a share in coral trade. William Finch in 1609 mentioned that a little quantity of red coral was sent to England for trial. On October 28, 1613, William Bidulph wrote to the company from Surat that, "coral was the chief commodity at Surat and will yield 40, 50, 60 and 70, mahmudies one seer, (Being three quarters of a pound). The bigger piece is better and costly than small." He further informed the company that it had a wonderful market in Deccan, where it was considered not less than gold as the "more they have of it in the house, the greater honour it is for them." It was used for burning with the dead⁴⁹ coral, yellow amber, tortoise shell bracelets and square pieces found in Patna and Dacca".

FUR, IVORY, MUSK: The bone and ivory were used for manufacturing domestic objects, luxurious goods and weapons. The ivory objects were used for combs, hairpins, bangles, dices, decorative pieces of mirror Handles, small boxes for cosmetics material, arrow heads, short daggers, harpoons etc. Tavernier refers to the trade between Patna and Bhutan via Gorakhpur. The merchants of Bhutan arrived at Patna to sell their musk. During two months stay here, they purchased musk of Rs.26000/ worth and earned huge profits. The best quality Rhubarb also came from the Kingdom of Bhutan. The seed yielding warm powder and some special kinds of drugs produce from it. Beautiful furs were also imported from Bhutan. Besides bows and arrows, tents, saddles, swords, boots and shoes⁵⁰ Abul Fazl states that 'good' elephant were procurable in plenty in Bihar. John Marshall reported that some, elephant's teeth (weighting 1md. 5sr.

48 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, *Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India*, Delhi, 1975, pp. 87-88.

49 *Letter Received by the E. I. Company from its servants in the East 1602-17*. (ed) William Foster London, 1897-1902. Letter Received 1602 -13, p -301.

50 Op. cit., Manucci, p -424.

90 Eng. Lbs) was sold in Patna; Elephant tusk, 3 yard long, and ½ yard wide and its cost about Rs.55 or 60 a md.(80lbs)⁵¹

LIQUOR AND OIL MANUFACTURERS

Liquor and oil industry also thrived during this period. From literary references it appears that liquors and oil had become the commodities of common consumption. Different types of drinks and oils, shops where they were sold and the persons employed in them are noticed. The Vedic Soma continued to be used, but some new varieties were also discovered. Kamasutra also expresses the art of preparing sarbat and drinks. Various kinds of liquor, oil and their dealers are mentioned in the law books too. The popularity of drinks was a natural consequence to the growth of urban life. During the Mughal period, with certain exceptions, both Hindus and Muslims enjoyed wine drinking. The three important centres for the distillation of *Araq* were Bengal, Goa, and Batavia. *Araq* in Goa was made in such abundance that it could comply with demand of the whole of India and other Asian countries.⁵² Wine which was prepared from bread, rice, and bhang mixed in it called *Achhi* wine.⁵³ *Araq* was also distilled from neep toddy; commonly called '*Nipa de Goa*.' The Portuguese living in Indian towns and cities made wine from dried grapes or raisins.⁵⁴ Wine was distilled from Mahuwa tree as well. Liquor prepared with cloves, cinnamon and other spices boiled, was known as *brunt wine*.⁵⁵ According to Irfan Habib account, " the extraction of oil from the oil seeds also used to take place within the village at the hands of members of the semi –itinerant caste of *Telis*, oilmen working with the help of ox driven processes."⁵⁶

GLASS INDUSTRY: Glass and Lead are popular since ancient times. The lead sheets called *Sisapiccatarka* are mentioned in the *Mahavastu*. The articles made from glass were beads, bangles and mirrors. The fine colour glass objects

51 Op., cit., *Ain –II*, Tr. (JRS), p -164

52 John Ovington, *A Voyage to Surat in the year 1689*, Edited by H.G. Rawlinson, London, 1929. p -142.

53 Ibid

54 Ibid, p -143.

55 Op., cit., *English Factories*, 1670 -77, p -48.

56 Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India 2nd revised edition*, oxford -1999, p -66.

and their low specific gravity suggest that Indians had good knowledge of the chemical side of glass technology. Abul Fazl states that gilt glass was manufactured in Bihar during the Mughal period.⁵⁷ Buchanan noted that there were 320 families of glass workers (Churisaz) only in Bihar in early 19th century. Arsi (Mirror) was also worn. It was a ring mounted with a little mirror having pearls around it. Writing about the mirror Manucci remarked: “through this mirror they use to look at themselves, an act of which they are very fond of at every moment.”⁵⁸ Lead was mostly used in packing cloth or manufacturing red lead. Till 1639, the market of lead showed a heavy slump and it was sold at 7½ mahmudies per mound.⁵⁹

POTTERY: Both literary and archeological evidences suggest the flourishing condition of Potter’s crafts. The word kumbhara find mention in the Angavijja: A guide of Potters in referred to in one of the inscription from western India. The potters prepared pottery of diverse shape and use human and animal figurings, toy carts, bricks, tiles and other miscellaneous house hold objects. Manucci found that “Patna was the main centre for manufacture of bottles and fine earthen pottery. Potters were busier in Akbar’s time in producing earthenware for common people, because they could not afford metal vessels. Thus a survey of handicrafts in general revealed that, “The income of commodities relatively to the population has substantially increased.”⁶⁰

HEMP AND JUTE: regarding the manufacture of Hemp and Jute, Moreland informed that in Akbar’s time “Jute was in Bengal but sann –hemp was further West fiber grown for domestic use and of no industrial interest.”⁶¹ Regarding Jute, Jagdish Narayan Sarkar indicated that in “Akbar’s time Jute occupied to some extent the place of cotton as well as Hemp till ‘Jute became an important

57 Op. cit. Ain –II, p -164.

58 Pramod Sangar, *The Socio Economic History of Mughal India*, 2003, p -31.

59 Op. cit. *The English Factories 1637 -41*, p -49

60 Op. cit. W.H Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, p -150.

61 W.H. Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, p -167, in Tapan Rai Chaudhuri and Irfan Habib ed. *The Cambridge economic history of India*, Vol. –I, p -272. indicates Moreland belief that the poor in Bengal were clad in Jute cloth is now known to be based on a misrendering of the word tatband used in the Ain which referred to eri –silk, not Jute”

industrial crop and the price of cotton goods was lowered as the result of the introduction of machinery"⁶²

TEXTILES: It was one of the most important and flourishing industries of the period. The fine Indian muslin formed an item of foreign trade. The Jatakas refer to tailors, weavers, washerman and kasi cloth manufacturers in Banaras. Cotton thread spinners, dyers, manufacturers and cloths of various kinds are noticed in the travellers accounts. Textiles formed the most important place of Indian manufactures. According to Moreland, "silk weaving was only a minor industry in Akbar's time and the subsequent decay on which so much stress has been laid did not affect the weaving industry so much as the production of the raw material. Consumption had greatly expanded due to the result of European rising demand after Akbar's death".⁶³

Banaras, for instance, was renowned for its cotton and silk cloth with Zari work, i.e., designs woven in gold and silver thread. "In this city much gold and silver work done on cloths which were distributed hence all over the Mogul realm and was exported to many parts of world".⁶⁴ Textile production was the most important sector of India's economy after agriculture, in pre-colonial times; and in the 17th century it also accounted for a significant share in the entire international trade.⁶⁵

Samana, situated at a distance of 17 miles south west of Patiala town, is a place of considerable antiquity. According to tradition, Samana was founded by the fugitives of the samanid dynasty of Persia. Due to Jahngir's efforts, Samana 'possessed a thriving colony of weavers. The samana cloths

62 Op., cit., Moreland Ibid, p -167.

63 Ibid, p -160, according to Jagdish Narayan sarkar, *Mughal Economy Organisation and Working*, "Moreland thesis contains only half truths. Seri culture was an old industry in India even if it were a minor one in the 16th century, I was in such a flourishing state in certain centers like Ahmedabad, Kashmir, Bengal, Bihar and Patna that considerable silk was exported to foreign countries ---About 1600 the raw material was partially imported and partially produced in India., p -38.

64 Op., cit., Manucci, op. cit., p. 83.

65 Irfan Habib, *Essays in Honour of Prof. S.C. Sarkar*, People's Publishing House, New Delhi (*Indian Textile Industry in the 17th Century*), p 81.

were known by various names as like Choutar remianes, samanas, remianoes , symeanoes and semiyanes⁶⁶.

COTTAN: Cotton weaving according to Moreland, “was the most extensive industry in India”, and he considered it “fair to say that the aggregate production was one of the great facts of the industrial world of the year 1600”, which impressed even the Portuguese. However, Moreland found Pyard's “picturesque phrase, that “every one from the Cape of Good hope to China, man and woman, is clothed from head to foot” in the Indian clothes, but there is an exaggeration, because the nakedness of people living between Cape and Good Hope to China was proved by recorded facts of travellers.⁶⁷ The cotemporary literature of the period also indicated “that the clothing worn was exceedingly scanty, not merely on the warmer parts of India, where clothes are conventional necessities but in regions where they are absolutely required for efficiency.”

Table 5.1

**Streysham Master Diaries-II 3rd January 1678-79,
Servant wages (At Hugli) p -304**

Sr. No.	Designation	Wages
1.	For the Chief	Rs.12 per Mensem
2.	For the Second	Rs.8 per Mensem
3	For the Minister	Rs.6 per Mensem
4	For the 3 rd of Council	Rs.5 per Mensem
5	For the 4 th of Council	Rs.5 per Mensem
6	For the Cryosurgeon	Rs.4 per Mensem
7	For the Secretary	Rs.2 per Mensem
8	For the Steward	Rs.2 per Mensem

66 Op., cit., The English Factories in India –1618-21 P-XXI and S. P Sangar,

67 Ibid, p -168.

Which are to be lent by any but the chief gurriallz, Thorawala, groomj, cookes, mussalis [mash al chig, scullin], washing; door keeper, barber, and ca, servants as usual:

Table 5.2

At the Subordinate Factories, Servant Wages

Sr. No.	Designation	Wages
1.	For the Chief	6Rs. Per mensom
2.	For the second	4Rs. Per mensom
3.	For the third	3Rs. Per mensom
4.,	Charges general keeper	2Rs. Per mensom

Table 5.3

**Wages of East India Company's servants at Hugli in 1678 -79
(Based on Streynsham Master)**

Sr. No.	Post	Wages
1.	The Chief	RS. 12 Per Mensem
2.	The Second	Rs. 8 " "
3.	The Minister	Rs. 6 " "
4.	The 3 rd of Council	Rs. 5 " "
5.	The 4 th of Council	Rs. 5 " "
6.	The Chyrurgeon	Rs. 4 " "
7.	The Secretary	Rs. 4 " "
8.	The Steward	Rs. 2 " "
9.	Subordinate for the Chief	Rs. 6 " "
10.	Subordinate for the Second	Rs. 4 " "
11.	Subordinate for the Third	Rs. 3 " "
12.	The Barber	Rs. 2 " "
13.	Charges General Keeper	Rs. 2 " "

(At Cassum-Bazar Only)⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Streynsham Master, op., cit., Vol. II, pp -334-35. Meera Nanda, *European Travel Accounts During the Reigns of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb*. Kurukshetra, 1994, p 64.

PORT AND SHIPPING: In transport sector, port and shipping is very significant from the point of view of foreign trade, export of commodities which earn valuable foreign exchange, import of essentially required inputs for development of the country and for transportation by developing overseas and coastal shipping and inland water transport.

A cursory glance at the contemporary records of the times proved that India perused a flourishing trade in the 17th century. Throughout the period, there was considerable internal and external trade as the goods produced in any part of the country were sent through river traffic consisting of native boats and smaller ships, especially designed for internal or coastal trade. With the coming of the Europeans, the coastal trade got further boost and the number of small indigenous crafts or boats pressed into service, increased sharply. Ships and boats were the principal means of water transport. The sea and the rivers were more advantageous for commercial purpose. Some important ports are given below.

Due to discovery of new routes some ports and towns came into existence such as Surat, Broach, Burhanpur and many more cities in Deccan and in other parts of the country came into prominence. These ports provided the quickest opportunity for the transshipment of their commodities. These trading stations were connected not only with different parts of India, but also with those of central Asia. Hence, the controllers of these places could gather immense wealth by levying taxes on commerce.

HOOGHLY PORT: Hooghly port called Porto Pequeno by the Portuguese came into prominence as a great centre of maritime commerce. Charter of a trade settlement of Hooghly was granted to the Portuguese by Akbar. It became the most flourishing place of all Portuguese settlements. It earned world fame for cotton, silk and embroideries. Except the Portuguese, the English and the Dutch were carrying on a lucrative trade during the Mughal period. It had internal trade with Bengal, Patna and Orissa of mostly cotton goods, calicoes and some other provisions sold in the public market. According to Alexander Hamilton the town of Hugli was, particularly, known for its rich trade. All the foreign goods were

brought there for sale and the goods from Bengal were largely exported. There was a customs house as about fifty to sixty ships annually, anchored there. The goods were carried to other neighboring places in small vessels. The place was famously rich for the availability of various commodities.⁶⁹

In 1628 as many as 100 ships sailed off from this port carrying various commodities including rice butter, oil and wax. A contemporary price list shows how cheap were the things:- rice (200 lbs.): Rs. 3/-, butter (75 lbs.): Rs. 2/-, Sugar (200 lbs.): half a rupee, 20 fowls: Rs. 2/- and a cow: Re. 1/-.

The port established with Akbar's blessing thrived very well and attracted ships from China, Philippines and Malacca and also from all other parts of India. Chief trade was salt. Annual customs duty paid at Hugli by the Portuguese amounted to 100000 tamgas (a tamga equal to 10 silver rupees). The Emperor was interested in the foreign trade because of the enormous customs duty collected from salt.⁷⁰

GOA: On the basis of epic references, Goa is a prominent place since ancient period. Goa was known as cool and fertile land. Under the Hindu rule in the ancient period, Goa flourished as a city. Its well known trade relations were with Zanzibar in the West and Sumatra in the East. During the 15th century Goa made great progress. "It became the meeting place of all eastern trading stations and also focal point for all Muslim pilgrims for Mecca embarked from here".⁷¹

Ralph Fitch mentions important fact about the Portuguese possession. If any ship arrived at Goa with a cargo of merchandise and horses, it had to pay custom duty only on horses while merchandise was fully exempted, but if the ship had no horses it had to pay a custom duty of 8%.⁷²

Goa stated as prosperous city and port. Thevenot wrote that "The city is great and full of beautiful churches, gardens and well adorned with palaces.

69 *The English Factories in India*, 1646-50, p, 34.

70 Ibid, Pp, 31, 54, 13, 137, 151, 176,320.

71 H. A. R. Gibb, (Eng .Trans.) *Travels of Ibn . Battutain Asia and Africa* pp, 145,228,229 , 234, 262.

72 Ibid.

There were few nations in the world where all comfort was found as the Portuguese feel in India". In 1675, Fryer described Goa as the Rome in India. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Goa was a very opulent city. Its harbour was always full of vessels of many nations. Merchants from England, Spain, Italy, Germany and from countries in the middle, south-east and far-east took up their residence in Goa and participated in its prosperous trade and shipping.

SURAT: Surat was an ancient city through centuries and a well-known centre of maritime trade. It is firstly described as a port by Ptolemy. Besides commercial venture, Gulf Port, particularly, Surat was the starting point of the pilgrimage route to holy places of Arabia and as per the tradition of the times; they used to carry valuable articles with them to sell these in order to meet their pilgrim expenditure. During Akbar's time, Surat became an important port as well as commercial Station. So, before the advent of the English on the western coast, a very extensive trade was carried on in Surat by the indigenous merchants. From Surat alone sailed the ships belonging to the Mughal Emperor for various places in the Middle East and south East Asia every year. Besides, there were smaller ships owned by individual merchants coming and going in large number and doing flourishing business.

After the advent of the English, the Indian trade suffered a great setback because all the chief ports like Duhbol, Aden, Ormuz, Mokha were taken over by the British and the same was the case with other Indian ports. The Indians and the Portuguese merchants put the entire blame for this on the English and the Dutch called them 'scourges' of the seas and of their prosperity.⁷³

The importance of Surat is testified in several letters of the English factors. William Biddulph, wrote "a letter to the Directors of the East India Company at London in January 1612, from Surat, inviting their attention to the various Indian commodities available at Surat and further delineated the scope of English goods there. The letter was both detailed and informative about Surat,

73 Ibid

it, markedly, showed considerable enthusiasm of the English in striving to retain Surat as an important centre of trade for so many reasons. Thomas Aldworth, William Biddulph and Nicholas Withington were very keen to retain Surat as an important trading centre of western India".⁷⁴

MASULIPATAM: Masulipatam in the coromandel coast was an important port through many centuries in the ancient and medieval periods of Indian history. Masulipatam was mentioned by Ptolemy in his tables and in the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea as Masalia. For centuries Masulipatam was famous for its export of cotton goods. During the reign of Akbar, it was an important port having commercial relations with Pegu and Malacca. Soon after the Dutch establishment there, trade here and there trade increased sharply by importing spices, metals, luxury goods and loading textiles for the Far East.

It was a busy sea port and from its harbour ships regularly sailed to Bengal and Burma; laden with a variety of cotton cloth, yarn, iron, glass, tobacco and cowries which were used as currency in Bengal and Burma; returning with silk, rice and till seed, a variety of Sesame as well as sugar, woven fabrics and quilts, rubies and sapphires, lac, benzoin, porcelain, glazed ware, tin and gold. Ships also sailed to Ceylon, Malaysia and Indonesia bringing out Sulphur, Camphor, Silk, Tin and China-ware. Excellent quality cloth was also manufactured in Gujarat.⁷⁵ There is no king or queen in the world who might but be glad to wear them. He saw cotton diamonds, rubies, pearls, agates, indigo, rice and slaves being exported in return for all that Malaysia, Indonesia, Ceylon, Bengal, Burma, Cambay, and even Europe could offer.

Masulipatam grew in importance with the rise of the Golconda kingdom in the early 17th century. The trade was, particularly, brisk with ports in the Persian Gulf, Bengal, Burma, Malaya and Sumatra. The cargo from Bengal used to be transhipped at Masulipatam for onward transportation to Surat and West Asia

74 *Oriental Commerce*, pp. 10-11. (Introduction). William Foster, (ed.) *Letters Received by The East India Company from its Servants in the East*, Vol. I, pp. xxiii, xxiv, xxviii, xxix, (Introduction)

75 *Tavernier's Travels*, Vol. I, pp. 66-67.

Similarly, imports from the West coast were to be transshipped at Masulipatam for further distribution in the East

TOWN AND PORT ADMINISTRATION DURING MUGHAL RULE (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SURAT)

During Mughal's rule in India, the Town administrative organization was the outcome of its peculiar needs as well as commercial and economic importance. It constituted a completely separate unit, entirely independent of the provincial authorities. It had two separate administrators: of these one was a military officer entitled Qiladar, who commanded the castle and the river Tapi on which the fort was situated. The other was a civil officer entitled Mutasaddi, or the Superintendent of customs, who then administered the port of Surat, Broach and Cambay and had the charge of collection of the customs revenue.⁷⁶ Besides custom officers, there were a number of officers given below who supervised and had the various departments in Surat.

QILADAR –Military Officer

MUTASADDI –Civil Officer or the superintendent of custom

SADAR –Head of the Judicial Department

QAZI –Head of the Religious Department

BAKSHI –Paymaster of the Armymen

KOTWAL –Head of the internal Defense, Health Sanitation and all other Municipal functions

SAWANIH NAWIS –Secret Reports

HARKARH –Information Officer of Secret Service

WAQIANIGAR –Agent of the Secret reporter

DAROGHAS –Office superintendent

AMIN –Revenue Assessor

SHAH BANDAR –The Customs Officer of Port.

PART – B

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL TRADE: The foregoing account of the growth, expansion and volume of English trade may remain incomplete without the reference to the various models of trade pointed out by experts on Asian trade and European expansion; as many as six models have recently been suggested. As individual peddling, collective peddling, occasional peddling etc.⁷⁷ India, indubitably, had trade relations with the out side world were right from time immemorial, and Indian goods rated very high in the eyes of the foreigners. The magnitude of the commercial activity is quite apparent from the following words of Pliny, "In no year does India drain our empire of less than five hundred and fifty million secrecies (about 140000 Pond) giving her own wares in exchange which are sold at fully one hundred times their prime cost."⁷⁸ The nature of India's trade inland and foreign during the Mughal period, as in the earlier days of her history, was such as she imported costly luxury goods for novelties, like woolen cloth, silks, velvets, glass and mirrors, wine and spirit, precious metals, particularly gold, silver, other metals like copper, lead, tin zinc, quick silver, coral and horses etc. India has a very ancient business tradition, as has been pointed out, and the system of castes assigns separate and major caste of VA/SYAS, expressly for the purpose of trading. The old trading classes of the Gujaratis or Marwaris of the North and the Chettis of the south are still associated with the commercial activities. During the Mughal period, the old class of grain – carriers, known as *BANJARAS* of Rajputana, still employed hundreds of Thousands of Oxen in their trade. Some of their caravans amounted to as many as 40,000 head of oxen.⁷⁹

76 P. Chakrabarty, *Anglo-Mughal Commercial Relation*, Calcutta, 1983, p106.

77 Dietmor Rothermund, *Asian Trade and European expansion in the age of merchantilism*, Delhi, 1981, pp. 8-9.

78 H. Rackham (Eng. Tr.) Pliny, *Natural History* Vol. X. PP- 17, 18. and Pramod.Sangar *Growth of the English trade under the Mughals*, P- I.

79 K.M Ashaf, *life and conditions of the people of Hindustan* P-137.

The tiny market in village and the city market were popular during this period, besides the regular shops, petty shopkeepers and dealers also carried on their business in moveable stalls, on pack horses, peddlers and itinerancy dealers were common.⁸⁰ Bigger deals in commodities were made in special market towns or Mandis, which also served as convenient media or exchange for the surplus of corn or goods produced in the vicinity. Administrative cities like Multan, and Lahore, or capital cities like Delhi sometimes served as big clearing houses for whole provinces. The annual and periodical fairs of a neighboring town, the retail merchants and petty shopkeepers of the surrounding places obtained their new stock of goods or replenished the old one. Specially, cattle fairs, on a large scale, were held in well known places for the sale of all kinds of cattle e.g. Horses, Oxen, Camels, Cows, and Buffaloes, people came long distances to buy or dispose of their animals.⁸¹

With the advent of Islam, Indian trade was carried on by the Arabs. "The Arab merchants who then engrossed almost all the commerce of the world soon turned their attention to the native region of these products, repaired to it in large numbers and developed an exceedingly profitable trade with the west. The great Emporium of this trade in the Asian waters were at Ormuz, Aden, Suakin, Sofala, Cannanore, Calicut and Malacca, Ormuz on the land route and Tor, on the Red –Sea route were the gateways of the West. From Ormuz the commodities from Japan, China, Siam, Cambodia, the spice Islands Malaya and India were transported in ships up to Persian gulf, and the river *Euphrates*, and by caravans on to Alppo and Damascus, and Trebizend; whence they were distributed all over the Asia Minor; Southern and western Europe, and throughout Muscovy. The merchandise collected at Mocha was sent on to Tor or to Suez, and thence by caravan to Grand Cairo, and down the Nile to Alexandria and Rhodes where it was shipped to Venice, Genoa, Barcelona and other ports of the Mediterranean".⁸²

80 Salzmann, 244, for *Trade conditions in Medieval England*. Or K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Conditions of the people of Hindustan* P- 137.

81 K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Conditions of the people of Hindustan* PP- 137, 138.

82 Bird wood, *Records of the East India Company* p- 865. quoted in Marriott, *The English in India*. P – 35. or R.K. Mukerjee, *The Economic History of India* .P- 106.

Marco Polo, a Venetian traveller, who came to India in 1260 has left behind a valuable account of Indian trade. He found Bengal, Gujarat, Cambay Maabar and Malabar humming with traders ; both Indian and foreigners, he found Bengal as the most extensive and one of the richest provinces famous for the production of Cotton, sugar and many sort of Drugs. Malabar, according to him, was the noblest and the richest province abounding in the finest and most beautiful Cottons, Spices and Nuts; Gujarat was famous for the production of Indigo and here Cotton was produced in large quantities. The other varieties of Gujarat, were Bedcovers, Cushions, ornamented with gold wire and Muslins Embroidery was done with more delicacy than in any part of the world; the other notable travellers who have testified the account's was Ibn– Battuta and Barbosa. They were highly impressed by the trade activity in Ports of Western and Southern India. According to Ibn – Batutta, Cambay were the handsome and flourishing city, full of foreign merchants.

Describing Malabar, Ibn Battuta, says, "It is full of spices especially pepper." Calicut was chief port of Malabar and one of the largest Harbours of the World. The merchants from Ceylon, Maldives, Yeman and China flocked there in order to buy Indian goods, especially pepper. Bengal was also a land of extraordinary fertility and the cost of things was very low. It abounded in rice. Describing the cheap price of victuals and other goods in Bengal he says, "Now here in the world have I seen any land where prices are lower and the people of Khurasan call it, a hell full to good things." The other specialty of Bengal was the extensive production of cotton goods.⁸³

But trade within towns and cities, unlike the villages, was more varied and complicated. Bazzars developed in and around big towns and cities; the crowded bazaars of Surat, is one of the examples of having shops on each side of the main street. Further the great bazaar at Hugli showed exchange of almost all sorts of commodities. In Goa, for example, the masters sent their slaves to sell commodities in the daily market. The Surat market was comparable to

⁸³ *Travels of Ibn Battuta in Asia and Africa* . PP., 228-229. or Pramod Sangar *Growth of the English trade under the Mughals*, P., 5.

Egypt, and was described as a terrestrial paradise⁸⁴. Delhi and other provincial capitals were the focus of the internal trade of their respective Territories and displayed considerable commercial activities.⁸⁵

Tavernier noted that the producers (e.g. the textile weavers of Benares) marketed their own products and every urban centre had artisans and specialized manufactures around it.⁸⁶

Unlike the trade in rural markets that there was intra regional and intra local trade was carried out through the urban centre. In rural-bazaars the commodities were of local products, whereas in urban centers the commodities were collected from other places. The rural market served the local inhabitants, but in urban centers, in addition to this, outside dealers and traders also, at times, purchased from the centre. The urban bazaars were having a variety of commodities including cooked food, sweets meat, cotton fabric etc. In case of inter-local trade there was only one way process in which the commodities were transferred from the village to town customary arrangements were the ways of distributing products among the inhabitants of a village. There was no existence of the system of exchange. Both credit and commerce were greatly aided by the institution of brokerage, present in all parts of India except the South.⁸⁷

The Banias whose caste provided the Bulk of Indian merchants and bankers specialized in this profession as well. To them banking bill discounting were also forms of brokerage. Brokers, specially, met the needs of smaller merchants. There were large firms as well as we get to hear of agents or factors (Gumsahtas vyparis) who worked on behalf of their principals (Sahs, Sahus) in shops (dukans, kothies) in different places.⁸⁸ However, the scale of trade markets, in terms of the present standard, was quite small. The Banjaras

84 Valentin, N,II, P- 5,6

85 K.M.Ashraf, *Life and conditions of the people of Hindustan* P- 142

86 Jean Baptiste Tavernier *Travels in India*, 2 Vols. English translations by V.Ball, London, 1889., I – PP- 96 -97.

87 K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Condition of the People Hindustan*. P-138, 139.

88 Irfan Habib, *Merchant Communities in Pre- Colonial India. or The rise of Merchant Empires*, PP-389-91.

carrying foodstuffs on nearly 20,000 pack-oxen from place to place is noted by Moreland. Two distinct functions were performed by those markets in Mughal-India. The first is that the local buyers were provided with commodities for consumption; and the second, the local markets exported, commodities to distant markets for consumption of buyers of the latter, at times, organization performed those dual functions of the market. There were traders and places dealing exclusively with one of the two; and rare instances exist where there was no link between these two types of markets.

The markets also ranged from small huts to big international markets Ray Chaudhuri, notes mainly four type of markets in Mughal-India. In small scale bazaars goods were gathered from places within a sort radius primarily for the purpose of local consumption in Mandis or wholesale markets.

Periodic fairs where specialized traders met together to sell and replace their stocks, but consumers were not excluded. The "isolated" rural market was that where the local surplus produces were exchanged among the producers and consumers.⁸⁹

There were great variations existing in the functions and wealth of the merchants; even the merchants of port towns were comparable to the merchant princes of Europe. There were independent traders who were less affluent than the merchants. Generally the functions of the small merchants were specialized and their activities included more than one locality. The Banjara constituted a portion though not large, of the small traders. They belonged to a tribe which dealt with the trade of corn, rice, pulses and salt respectively. They lived in Tandas, and sometimes merchants hired them. The peasant also, at times, acted as traders when they went to the local market to sell their own products

Caravans and (Cafilas) travelled long distances as from Bengal to Agra, from Agra to Multan, from Lahore to Surat or Bhakkar came to the bank of the

89 Tapan Ray Chaudhuri, and Irfan Habib, "*The Cambridge Economic History of India*"-1 pp-339-40.

Indus. Such caravans sometimes comprised as many as 20,000 animals.⁹⁰ Tavernier described a caravan thus, “they give an ox a load weighing 300 or 350 liters, and it is an astonishing sight to behold caravans numbering 10,000 or 12,000 oxen together, for the transport of rice, corn and salt carrying rice to where corn only grows and corn to where only rice grows and salt to the place where there is none”. Similarly, Peter-Mundy came across in his itinerary caravans comprising even 14,000 to 20,000 oxen, each carrying a load of four maunds. The camp of the banjaras, a nomadic tribe of public carriers was called Tanda and comprised men, women and children who continuously moved from place to place ‘Their oxen were their own. They were sometimes hired by merchants, but most commonly were the merchants themselves buying grain where it was cheap and carrying it to places where it was dear and from thence reloading themselves with such things as salt, sugar, butter etc’.⁹¹

During the 17th century economic growth in Mughal India was stimulated by a growing importance of a new, external connection: the link between Mughal India and early modern Europe. The Northern Europeans –Dutch, English, French and even Ostenders –organized into joint –stock trading corporations, hunted aside the Portuguese as the dominant naval powers and traders in the Indian ocean each trading concern operated under a royal charter which granted it exclusive national rights to carry out the India trade. The Dutch East India Company and English East India Company proved to be long lived, highly profitable, long –distance trading corporations. The French East India Company was late entrant and suffered erratic management as the royal trading corporation. These East India Companies created and nurtured a steadily enlarging economic political and cultural tie with the Indian subcontinent.

Among the Exports – There is abundant evidence to show that India has a glorious maritime history. In ancient times, India was the principal focus of international maritime trade between the East and the west. Commercial contact with the west continued in the succeeding period and both by land and sea. “For full 13th centuries India stood out as the very heart of the commercial world,

90 Manrique describes the Great Caravans of 60,000 Camels carrying pilgrim and merchandise from Damascus to Mecca (*Travels*. Vol. 2, p-380)

cultivating trade relations successfully with the Phoenicians Jews, Assyrians, Greeks, Egyptians and Romans in ancient times as Turks, Venetians, Portuguese Dutch and English in modern times. The various foreign works are full of abundant reference about Indian trade and commerce.

Large quantities of manufactured cotton goods, divided particularly into three groups -calicoes, muslins and fancy goods -formed the foundation of the export trade. The second largest commodity exported was the spices, pepper, ginger, cardamoms, turmeric and various drugs. Gum-lac, pearls and diamonds too were sent out. Indigo was the third important item of export. Bengal sent out sugar and rice, from the Coromandel Coast and dyed yarn went to Pegu, where it was much in demand. Brocades and embroideries were also exported. India traded with China, Persia, Arabia, Central Asia, Egypt and the countries of South East Asia, such as Ceylon, Burma, Indo-China, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, and the Indian Archilelago. India had also its commercial relations with some of the countries of Europe before the land routes of that continent were blocked by the Turkish conquest of Constantinople. When the Portuguese discovered the sea-route to India by rounding the Cape of Good Hope and Vacso-da-Gama landed at Calicut in 1498, trade with Europe was resumed. The English, the Dutch, and the French followed the Portuguese, and the commercial relations with Europe became intimate.⁹²

The exports of India consisted of a variety of indigenous products, especially, grain and cotton cloth. Some countries round the Persian Gulf were dependent on India for their entire food supply. The chief ports for export trade were Gujarat and Bengal. The principal exports of Gujarat consisted of precious stones, pepper, ginger, indigo, cotton and linen fabrics. Among the exports of Bengal, Barbosa mentions the famous muslins of Bengal along with food and white cane sugar. Eminent scholar Professor S. P. Sangar expresses in his book, *Indian Textiles in the 17th Century* that there were two hundred varieties of cotton and silk cloths manufactured in India during the period under study. He also

91 R.K. Mukerjee, *The Economic History of India (1600-1800)*, PP-118, 119.

92 Animesh Ray, *Maritime India, Ports and Shipping*, Delhi.

noticed that Indian cloth did not have a ready market in India alone, but enjoyed a flourishing market abroad. Almost all the countries of the world depended on Indian cloth which was so superior to and much cheaper than the cloth manufactured in their own countries.

The East India Company became a major exporter of Indian cloth not only to England and the rest of Europe, but to Persia, Turkey and other Middle Eastern countries to Far East. The Indian cloth dominated English homes and minds. During this period, cotton fabrics and silk fabrics textile was extensively found in Gujarat, Surat, Baroda, Burhanpur, Broach, Cambay, Bombay, the Sind and the Punjab, Samana, Agra, Bihar, Orissa, Bengal and the cloth fabrics of the Coromandal coast. These textiles were not even exported to England only but countries like Middle East and South East Asia also⁹³. The Ain has mentioned about thirty varieties of cotton cloths manufactured in India at the end of the 16th century. But we learn from a perusal of the contemporary records of the East India Company alone that the actual list was formidable and India manufactured varieties of cloth at least ten times larger than accounted by Abul Fazl. There was, however, considerable export of Indian cloth to England and a number of other countries in Europe, Persia and Arabia, Turkey and Tartary to Russia and Japan and to the countries in the Indian archipelago like Java, Sumatra, Malucas and Malay etc⁹⁴. There was a remarkable commercial activity in the country when Indian and foreign merchants and their indigenous brokers approached our weavers in villages and towns and placed large orders with advanced money from them for the manufacture of vast quantities of cloth of all varieties for Export: (Varieties of Clothes)

Quilts were made of cotton or qutni, a kind of satin half cotton, half silk. Abul Fazl included in the list of clothes of gold tasa Gujarati which was very costly. Malik Mohmmad Jaysi has referred to the Meghauna variety of cloth of gold ornaments with pearls. The contemporary Hindi poets have referred to Jaraks, Zartari, Zarbaft or Zarat and Meghauna among the cloths of gold prevalent in India in

93 S. P. Sangar, *Indian Textiles in the Seventeenth Century*. P. vii

94 Ibid p, 1

the 16th and 17th Centuries.⁹⁵ Jadunath Sarkar says about Gujarat that it known as the gateway of India to the western world; its cities had become prominent centres of trade and commerce as well. The wealth and prosperity of its merchants had made them into powerful pressure group, their associations, known as Mahajans, each headed by a Shreshtha or Sheth, continued to remain an integral and important part of civic life in Gujarat.⁹⁶

The most important staples of the Mughal Empire were Indigo, which was manufactured in vats; and cotton wool which was made into calicoes. There was also a good supply of silk which was made into velvets, satins, and taffaties, but the best of them were not so good as those made in Italy. The English sold a few of their woollen clothes in India, but they brought most of the Indian commodities in hard silver. "Many silver streams were thus running into India, whilst it was regarded as a crime to carry any quantity away, because the Mughals had an instructive objection to the exportation of silver"⁹⁷

Commerce with foreign countries developed greatly under Akbar and Jahangir. Indigo, cotton cloth and wool, besides the spices, were the principal articles of export. Chinese porcelain, glasses, objects of curiosity and luxury, costly woollen cloths, gold and silver, were the principal articles of import. Gold and silver were not allowed to be exported and foreign traders who purchased Indian goods had to pay in cash. "The amount of bullion", writes Radha Kamal Mookerjee, "imported into India steadily increased in the Mughal period". In 1601 the English East India Company alone imported bullion valued at £ 22,000: by 1616 it rose to £ 52,000, and at the end of the 17th century it totalled annually to about £ 800,000. An idea of the foreign curious and costly stuffs patronised by the Mughuls could be had from the fact that besides some artistic porcelain and coloured glass utensils, Akbar left behind crockery worth rupees twenty-five lakhs.

95 Op., cit., *English Factory*, 1618, p. 43.

96 A. S. Altekar, *A History of Important Towns and Cities in Gujarat and Kathiawar* (Bombay, 1926), p. 53.

97 P. Sangar, "*Growth of The English Trade Under The Great Mughals*" 1556-1707 P.hD Thesis. p,438

By 1650 the importance of the port of Chaul, increased considerably as compared to Diu or Goa. Many Gujarati merchants and agents tried their best for the encouragement of trade, through port of Chaul, rather than Goa or Diu where they had to pay high duties to the Portuguese. It was impossible to estimate the value of Gujarat sea trade. In 1571, the customs revenue of 22 ports in Gujarat, excluding Cambay, was Rs. 3400,000, Rs. 20,00,000 was coming from Broach, Surat, Gogha, Gandhar and Rander, the rest came from 17 ports of Saurashtra. It gives a total custom payment of Rs. 400,000. From Gujarat Sultanate the total value of sea-trade assuming duties was Rs. 80000,000 at the rate of 5 percent.⁹⁸

Under the Northern Europeans the scale and range of Indian exports brought directly to Europe increased dramatically. The East India Companies made sharp inroads in black –pepper, the Portuguese staple obtained in the pepper –growing regions of the South –Western peninsula. As mass –consumption demands for pepper grew in Europe EIC imports from India rose accordingly. In 1621 the directors of the Dutch East India Company put the annual European import of pepper at 7 million lbs. English and the Dutch Companies shared the remaining 5.6 million lbs.⁹⁹

Other Indian commodities such as Indigo, grown and processed at Bayana near Agra, and in Gujarat enjoyed a steady and lucrative market in Europe. Raw silk, produced in Mulberry plantations in Kasim Bazaar and its hinterlands in Northern Bengal, became a new source of supply for the silk weaving industry in Italy and France after 1650. Between 1660 and 1689 European demand for Indian textiles soared as prices and demand rose steeply. In 1664 the English East India Company imported 273, 746 pieces of cotton cloth from India (approximately 4.2 million Sq. meters). The rising trend culminated in 1684 at 1,760,315 pieces (or 26.9 million Sq. Meters).¹⁰⁰

IMPORT: *Amir Khusrau* refers to a caravan carrying loads of betel leaves proceeding from Gujarat towards Delhi, another one carrying cloves and saffron

98 Pelsaert, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

99 K. N. Chaudhury, *Foreign Trade with India*, in Ray Chaudhury and Habib (ed.) the Cambridge Economic history of India. Vol. I p. 399.

leaves, proceeding from Bihar towards Agra. The trade of textile goods i.e. muslin came from Bengal and fine textiles from Gujarat. Shawls and carpets from Kashmir were demanded at Delhi. The introduction of the Iranian vertical looms into Kashmir and elsewhere in the 14th century stepped up both the quality and quantity of carpet production. Regarding foreign trade, the principal centre of overland trade in India was Multan. Silk was a profitable item of import while Indigo imported by Iran from India, must have been sent out by this route.¹⁰¹ Overland trade concentrated on such commodities which were light in weight but high in value because of the high cost of transportation. In case of sea-borne trade, the chief articles of import were the luxury articles like silk, velvet etc. Thus brocade and silk stuffs were imported from China, Iraq and Alexandria under Muhammad Tughluq.

India had an active and considerable foreign trade during the greater part of the Mughal period's with different countries of Asia and Europe. The volume of imports from England was, substantially, less than her exports as the English goods did not enjoy such popularity in Indian markets. The main reason for the unpopularity of English goods was their expensive nature, as a result the common consumer could not afford it so India always offered to the foreign trader's valuable commodities like cloth and spices, but in return took very few consumable commodities, and the result was that she had to be paid in gold or silver. Therefore, India came to be known as the 'sink of precious metals'¹⁰². The English traveller Terry put it, "many silver streams run thither as all the rivers to sea and there stay". The most conspicuous feature of Indian commerce was the absorption of the precious metals by way of the heavy exports by the Europeans from this country.¹⁰³ Hawkins remarked that 'India is rich in silver for all nations bring coin and carry away commodities for the same, and this coin is buried in India and goes not out.'¹⁰⁴

100 K. N. Chaudhary, *Trading world*. P. 547.

101 *Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol. I, p. 84.

102 Bernier's *F. Travel in the Mogul Empire 1656 -68*, Tr. A. Constance., revised edn. V. A. Smith. London, 1934, pp .202-203.

103 *Early Travels*, p,302.

104 *Ibid* , p,112.

The return trade from Europe was nearly confined to shipment of precious metals. For the entire period, the English could only look to modest sales of broad cloth and woolens, uncorked metals such as tin, lead, and copper and some European luxury goods. In 1660 as textiles exports accelerated, the Dutch and English Companies together shipped an average of over 34 tons, of silver and nearly half a ton of gold every year.¹⁰⁵

The importance of Indian spices increased when the English were 'driven away from the East Indies by the Dutch'. Abul Fazl has mentioned the various spices available during the time of Akbar:

105 J. F. Richards, (ed.) *Precious Metals in the later Medieval and Early modern World*. (Carolina, 1983), p. 24.

Asian Exports to Europe/European Imports from Asia

<i>Peoples of Asia</i>	silver (from Japan)	rugs, primarily from Ormuz
Indians, Chinese	Golden items; chests,	native costumes
Malays, Japanese,	goblets necklaces	hangings
Filipinos	coins	
sailors		
Navigator	<i>Precious and Semiprecious</i>	<i>Drugs</i>
Prisoners	Stones	datura (thorn apple or
slaves	diamonds	strammony)
	rubies	
<i>Fauna</i>	Sapphires	rhubarb
parrots and lorys	emeralds	Myrobalans (used also for
birds of paradise	spinels	dye)
(plumages)	carnelians	tamarins
elephants	bezoar stones	root of China
rhinoceroses	rocks (sometimes with	opium
emu	inscriptions on them)	bhang (Indian hemp or
Monkeys and apes	amber	hashish)
dodos	cat's eyes	benzoin
		camphor (wood, oil, and
<i>Flora: Dried and Fresh</i>		crystals)
Coconuts	<i>Ivory</i>	rhinoceros horn
seeds	wrought and unwrought	
myrobalans	woods	<i>Miscellaneous</i>
oranges	ebony	musical instruments
Trees, plants, shrubs	sandalwood	buffalo horn
double coconuts	aloeswood	Wax
durians	teak	Resin
	camphor of China,	hides
<i>Dyes</i>	Borneo, and Sumatra	Pearls and mother-of-
myrobalans	bamboo	pearl
Vermilion	coco palm	feathers and featherworks
indigo		Palm products
lac	<i>Furniture</i>	caulking
Indian saffron	Lacquered bowls and	chess sets
Alum	boxes	folding screens (<i>byobus</i>)
	desks	
<i>Incense and Perfume</i>	sedan chairs	armor and swords
pepper	tables	maps and charts
Musk	bedsteads	Manuscripts, books
civet	chairs	native costumes and
		slippers
<i>Ceramics</i>	<i>Textiles</i>	paintings, Chinese and
Porcelain	silk, raw and processed	Indian
Marta ban jars	cotton cloths, primarily	sexual appliances
seashells	from India	reeds (<i>Calumurotang</i>)
	bedspreads and quilts	ambergris
<i>Precious Metals</i>	embroidery needle-	varnish (tung oil)
gold (from Sumatra)	work	parasols

Donald F. Lach, Asia in the making of Europe

Table 5.4
Spices Available during the time of Akbar with Rates

Item	Prices in dam per seer
Saffron	400
Cloves	60
Round Pepper	52
Long Pepper	17
Dry Ginger	16
Fresh Ginger	4
Cumin seed (Zeera)	2 ½
Ani Seed (saunf)	2
Turmeric	10
Siahdana (Kalaungi)	1 ½
Assofoetida	2
Cinnamon	40 ¹⁰⁶

Tavernier found cardamom, ginger, pepper, nutmegs, mace, cloves and cinnamon to be familiar to the English.¹⁰⁷ The prices of various spices at Surat in 1609 were:

¹⁰⁶ Op., cit., *Ain –I –Akbari*, Vol. I., p -67.

¹⁰⁷ Op., cit., Tavernier's Travels Vol. –II, p -13.

Table 5.5
The Prices of Spices at Surat in 1609

Item	prices per maund in Mehmundi
Myrrh	10
Turbith	5
Aniseed	1
Fenugreek	$\frac{3}{4}$
Sweet Fennel seed	4
Cuminseed	2 or 3
Ginger Green	8
Ginger Dry	10 to 80
Assofoetida	10 to 80
Turmeric Preserved	(came from Balaghat)
Olibanum	or 5
Sal Ammoniac	9 or 10 ¹⁰⁸

Table 5.6
Prices of Different Commodities at Patna in 1632
(Based on Peter Mundy Accounts)

Commodities	Prices
Quick Silver Att	Rupees 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ Per Seere
Vermillion	" 4 " "
Nutmeggs	" 4 " "
Pepper	" 24 " Maund
Cloves	" 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Seere
Cardamum Or Ellachee (Ilachi)	" 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " "
Dry Ginger	" 10 " Maund
Allum	" 8 " "
Saffron Kostwally (Kishtwari)	" 16 " Seere
Ditto Cazmeeree (Kazhmiri)	" 10 " "
Nausador (Pers. Neusadar,	" 8 " Maund
Salammoniac, Solder)	
Butche (Hindi, Bach Orrisroot)	" 9 " "
Tynne	" 1 " Seere ¹⁰⁹

108 Op., cit., *Letters Received*, vol. I, p -31, 76.

109 Peter Mundy, op., cit., Vol.II, pp -153-54. or Meera Nanda, *European Travel Accounts During the Reigns of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb*, Kurukshetra, 1994, p. 63.

We get an idea of the prevalent rates at which the English factors entered into agreement with the local manufacturers from an account given in Streynsham Master's Diary in the year 1679. The rates were as follows:

Table 5.7
Streynsham Master's Diary in the year 1679

Item	Price per piece
Coarse cotton	Rs.4/-
Mixed cotton	Rs.3/-
Blue cotton	Rs.4½
Towellings	Rs.5/-
Thick muslins	Rs.7½
Soft Muslins	Rs.8/-

The goods which the brokers and contractors promised to supply to the Balasore factory, prior to shipping season, were as follows:

Goods
500 corgé of sannoes of 30 covids long and 2 covids broad viz.,
200 corgé 'herapore'
150 corgé Sura
150 corgé of Mohanpore

Goods	Rupees
500 corgé Gingham	30,000
400 corgé nelaes	36,000
Total	66,000

50 corgé Hamams 5,000
100 corgé Khasas (200 pieces)
15,000 150 corgé Mulmul (which is 100 corgé)
24,000

Total	150,000
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PROFESSIONAL URBAN GROUP

The Jain Upashayas served as residences for monks and place for religious congregation as well. It was a daily routine of the chief monk to give religious sermons to the followers along with the other monks in the morning. After that monks went around the city to collect food from each and every house of their followers which was known as Gochari in Jain terminology. This wandering made the monks well acquainted with the different localities and their occupants, buildings and bazzars of the city. Thus, they acquainted themselves with every detail of the city. Some of the enlightened monks composed ghazals in their leisure sketching the profile of city. The ghazals contain valuable information about the different professional and commercial groups. The methods and techniques adopted to sell their wares by shopkeepers also find a place in these compositions. These compositions were providing us valuable information about the professional and commercial groups and their activities.¹¹⁰

BANIAS: Parekh Bania family of Surat was provided the famous brokers of the English Company at the port. There were other wealthy and influential merchants and shroffs in Surat belonging to the Bania community. Besides the Parekhs detailed information about them is lacking, we know quite a bit about their financial standing from English records. Between 31st March and 25th July 1670, 14 Surat Banias lent a sum of Rs.523501 to the English Company. Between this amount Ballavdas, Goculdas's share as Rs.50000, Ballavdas, Banhalidas's Rs.80000 Kalyandas Jeswung's Rs.10000 and Ballavdas, Kishoredas's Rs. 50,000.

MONEY LENDERS: Money lenders also involved in business practices and customs. A whole class of people from both communities began to thrive on the business lending money. They advanced loans to support commercial undertakings, but their principal business was to lend money at the most profitable rate of interest. These sahus, mahajans, money lenders and bankers

110 Athar Hussain, *Professional and Commercial Urban Groups in early 17th and 18th centuries Rajsthan as reflected in The Ghazals*. IHC Proceedings, 61st (Millennium) session 2001, p.1321.

were extremely popular with all the upper classes whose extravagance and constant demand for money were proverbial. Regarding rate of interest, statement of Amir Khusrau, will put it for a rough calculation at 10 percent per annum on big sums and 20 percent on small or petty sums. The system of these usurious loans and compound rate of interest led to the heavy indebtedness of the poorer people who borrowed small sums but could hardly pay back, while the greater resources of a noble and in the last resort, his power and influence came to his rescue. In this connection, people usually carried about their cash or valuables in Himyanis or Hollow belts of tough clothes, which they usually wore around their waist on journey.¹¹¹

INDIAN MERCHANTS: Indian merchants find a considerable place in the accounts of Britishers as well as the European travel accounts; these merchants were heterogeneous in terms of their functions and wealth. During the period under study, there were some urban professional groups which indulge in trading and commercial activities. They were rich traders, development traders, small traders, merchants, banias, mahajans, money lenders, traders, merchants, brokers, mobile traders and sarrafs etc.

MERCANTILE ASSOCIATION: The Hindu merchants had apparently organised themselves into a corporation (Jihat). Through this corporation, transport merchants collaborated with the market merchants and controlled the prices of essential commodities like grain, not allowing prices to fall even in the time of abundance. R. C. Majumdar, A. S. Altekar and some other scholars express the role and importance of trader's organisation. These trader organizations, roughly compared with trade guilds of medieval Europe, existed in India at least from the 6th century B.C. to the beginning of the Mughal period, known as Shrenis, Sanghas, Pugas, Naigams and Mahajahans in different parts of the country or at different stages of time. These associations played a very important role in the economic and social life of the country during the medieval period. A typical city has several guilds, each presided over by a headman known in most of the cases as Shresthin. The Shresthin was neither elected nor

111 K. M. Ashraf, *Life and Condition of the People of the Hindustan*, p. 140.

appointed by a superior authority. He owed his position to popular acknowledgement as a result of his economic and social standing on the one hand and his demonstrated concern for his community or occupational group on the other.¹¹²

TRADERS AND INDIVIDUAL MERCHANTSHIP: *Mandelslo* writes, during Shahajahan's reign, "Santidass is in great favour at court; and the title of Nagar seth, conferred on him by the emperor is still borne by his descendents"¹¹³

But English Factory records frequently mention the name of Virji –Vohra was the leading traders of that time.¹¹⁴ Parekh family bania of Surat were also famous in English records due to their strong financial position.

"During 17th century tradition of individual merchantship likes Virji Vora in Surat, Malaya and of East coast who controlled the wholesale trade of the particular region. Indian continued to participate as investors and carriers of then flourishing internal and external trade in India. In the East coast there were among others, merchants like Kanakaraya, Anandaranga, Pillai, Mudali, Seshachala Chetty and others. Merchants from Bengal used to visit various places in Northern India like Punjab, Gujarat, Kashmir, Malabar, the Coromandel-coast and Assam. In Bihar the Europeans made their purchase of saltpetres through contracts with merchants like, Amichand, Dipchand, and Khwaja Wazid. Some Indian merchants and bankers played an active part in politics as well –Jagat seths, and Amichand in Bengal and Natha Ji, Arun Ji in Western India.¹¹⁵

VYAPARIS AND MAHAJANS: Constituted the most influential and dynamic class in the economic structure during the Mughal period. They were favoured by the state to granting them free trade facilities, if they started business. Mahajan and Vyaparis constituted the most influential and dynamic class in the economic structure during the Mughal period. They were favoured by the state

112 R. C. Majumdar, *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, Calcutta. 1918. pp. 1 -35.

113 John Albert de Mandelslo, *Mandelslo's Travels in Western India*, Edited by M.S.Commissariat, London, 1931.p. 59.

114 *The English Factory in India*, (1634 -36), ed. William Foster (Oxford: 1906 -27), p.216.

115 J. N. Sarkar, *Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India*. Delhi. 1975, p. 367.

by granting free trade facilities and reduction in the taxes if they started business in Marwar, the state also provided them facilities for constructing havelis. Rathor Amar Singh & Bhatt Ramchandra, Roop Chand, Bania Vinay Chand, Santok Chand, was assured of concession if they started business in Marwar. Besides granting permission to the merchants to conduct business in Marwar, liberally the state provided them facilities for constructing havelis and starting cultivation on Mokata. The impression of existence of merchant traders association and the institution of nagar seth is quite revealing.

W.W. Hunter Writes: In India the simple system of village economy is entirely based upon the dealings of the village Mahajan, sometimes the fashion to decay as a usurer but who was often the only thrifty person among an improvident population. His rate of interest was high; it was only proportionate to the risks of his business¹¹⁶

SARRAFS: Tavernier draws a fair picture about the sarrafs, who were the professional money changers and thus acquired a new and crucial role of commercial bankers. They exchanged foreign currency and old coins for new ones at certain discount. As Tavernier writes, "the new pagoda does not always bear the same value, for sometimes it is valued at 3½ rupees, sometimes more and sometimes less as it is elevated or depressed by the state of trade, and accordingly as the money –changers arrange matters with the princess and governors of kingdom of Bijapur. Here payment is made in the new pagodas which the king coin in his own name being entirely independent of the great Mughals."¹¹⁷

According to Tavernier old "Pagodas" which were worth of 4½ rupees i.e. one rupee more than new, "the merchants never receive these Pagodas without the aid of one of these changers to examine them, some being defaced, others of low standard, others of short weight so that if one accepted that without examination would lose much about 6 percent, in addition to which he must pay

116 W. W. Hunter, *Indian Empire*, p. 65.

117 Op., cit., Tavernier, op., cit., Vol. II, p. 89.

the sarrafs 1/4th % for their trouble.”¹¹⁸ In this way sarrafs or money changers constituted an important institution of trade and economy. Merchants and miners all received the money in the presence of the changers, who pointed out to the good or bad and every time money changers took its 1/4th % as his remuneration. In fact, the sarrafs, thus acquired a new and crucial role in all commercial transactions. Shraffs’ main job was to test the currency. They were appointed to examine the purity of gold and silver at the various mints of the country. The currency in the Mughal empire was of the highest metallic purity. All the gold and silver imported into the country was taken to the mint and converted into the currency of the country.¹¹⁹ The shraffs were experts in determining the weight and age of every coin. The other function of the shraffs was the money changing. The shraffs would change the old rupees (which were less than standard weight) into the newly coined rupees and also gold Mohurs into rupees and rupees in mahamundis or Dams. The value of those coins constantly fluctuated in accordance with the fluctuations in the prices of bullion. According to Bowery There were many shraffs in masulipatam.¹²⁰ The Banias ... of whom some are shraffs or bankers, other Brokers, employed between merchant and merchant for buying and selling.¹²¹ According to Charles Lockyer, “a considerable quantity or (bullion) is seldom bought or sold, but the shraffs who are of the chitty cast and in general Brokers to this business examine and weight it impartially between both parties having a small allowance for their care.”¹²²

BROKERS: Tavernier, Streynsham and Ovington, make some references about brokers. Tavernier expressed that, it was the custom throughout India that nothing was sold except in the presence of a broker. Each class of goods had its own separate broker, such as cart brokers and house brokers they received money from both buyers and sellers. These commissions ranged from 1 to 2 percent according to the class of goods. There were references about brokers

118 Ibid.

119 Irfan Habib, *Currency System of the Mughal Empire, 1556 -1707*, Medieval India quarterly, Vol. IV, 1961, pp. 1-2.

120 Richard Caranac Temple, (ed). Thomas Bowery's, *Geographical Account of the Cpuntries round the Way of Bengal*, p. 70.

121 V. Ball. (Tr.) Jean Bepstiste, *Tavernier Travels in India*, Vol. I, p. 167.

122 Records of Port St. George, 1680, p. 31.

being accredited with an appointment by the government to particular lines of business in different parts of Bengal. It is not clear if this practice was observed in other parts of the country as well,¹²³ the key role of brokers is also explained by Streynsham Master in his letter written in 1676. According to him the company appointed dalals for procuring cloth at Dacca.¹²⁴ Similar views are to be found in the account of the Fryer and Ovington.¹²⁵

WANDERING MERCHANT: According one opinion since the middle ages the retailer with purely local interest predominated, the fair developed as an important form in the first place and it was visited not only by the local men, but by travelling merchants also who came for the purpose. Possibly they must have taken part in collecting produce for export and in distributing imports to the village. These wondering merchants played a very important role in the organisations of bazars. Marco Polo has also mentioned about heterogeneous character of Indian bazars where merchants from different countries like China and Persia assembled for trade.¹²⁶ Generally the merchants used to move in groups and stay in the open space, outside the village in the tents.

SMALL MERCHANT: operated their business within a limited area on his journey to Agra, Tavernier, saw in a small town, "Five or six shops belonging to Banias which sell butter, rice, straw and vegetables. By the side of one of these shops, stood a large warehouse filled with racks of rice and grain"¹²⁷

MOBILE TRADERS: Tavernier and Peter Mundy write that the mobile traders were known as Banjaras. This was the class of carriers of goods. The Banjaras were divided into four tribes dealing respectively with corn, rice, pulses, and salt. Although they were merchants themselves yet sometimes they were hired by some merchants. They used to buy grains where it was cheaper and carry it to places where it was dearer. They also bought all such commodities which could

123 Tavernier, op., cit., Vol. I, p. 156.

124 Streynsham Master, op., cit., Vol. II, pp. 14 -15.

125 Ovington, op., cit., p. 163. Fryer op., cit., Vol. I, pp. 211 -12.

126 Leonardo Olschi, *Marco Polo's Precursors*, the John Hopkins Press, Baltimore., 1943, p. 545.

127 Tavernier, op., cit., Vol. I, p. 33

yield profit in other places. A Banjara caravan could have as much as 20,000 pack Oxen. It means that the paddling trade was organized on a massive scale.¹²⁸

During Mughal period, the trading community was mostly confined to small group of castes like the Banias, Vohra, and Parsees. Ovington writes “Banias are mainly edited to persecute their temporal interest and a massing of treasure and therefore, will fly at the securing of a price, too. They can command whole lacks of roublees.”¹²⁹

ARMENIAN TRADERS: A very important role was played by the Armenian traders in the Asiatic and Inland trade in India and in the economic history of Bengal during the 17th and 18th century in India. Their main articles of trade were cotton piece goods and raw silk on which they paid 3-1/2% custom to the Mughal government. A parwana of the Nawab of Bengal to the English of 1749 described them as “The kingdom’s benefactors, their imports and exports are an advantage to all men”. But they depended on the English, Dutch, French and Danish ships for their trade. By middle of the 18th century their Surat, and Hugli trade declined.¹³⁰

DANCING WOMEN: These women earned livelihood also by dancing. There used to be Hindu dancing women called devadasis who were required several times a week to sing and dance before the idols in the Hindu Temples.¹³¹ Manucci remarks that among the dancers and singers there were one class canchency (Kanchani) who were obliged to dance at the court twice a week. They were paid for this service. The king had allotted them a special place for dancing. Women performed in the main open place in the city from 6 to 9 in the night lighted by many torches. They earned a lot from such performances.¹³²

MASSAGE OR CHAMPING: The English Factor Peter Mundy was much impressed by the skill of the Etawa barbers when he happened to the there in August 1632. They were experts known for their skill in shaving and champing.

128 Tavernier, op., cit., Vol. I, p. 34. Peter Mundy, op., cit., Vol. II, pp. 95 -96.

129 Ovington, op., cit., p. 165.

130 W. H. Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, p. 156.

131 Op., cit., Manucci –III, p. 145.

132 Manucci –I, p. 196.

Mundy also remarks, that, they used these, as in other places in India, the Chameli, or Jasmine, oil for which Etawa was specially known. Women anointed their heads and bodies with this oil when they took their bath. It was regarded as very wholesome.¹³³

SNAKE CHARMERS: The snake –charmers of India have always attracted the attention of the foreign travellers. Herbert Moll also alludes to the snake – charmers who carried about snakes in baskets. As they uncovered the baskets and played upon the pipes, the snake would rise up and dance. They kept in time with the music with the motion of their heads, the lower part of their body remaining coiled up in the bottom of the basket.¹³⁴ Referring to the snake - charmers of Metchhlipatam, Fryer writes that they strike upon a reed run through a coco shell, which makes a noise something like our bag –pipes and the subtle creatures will listen to the music.¹³⁵

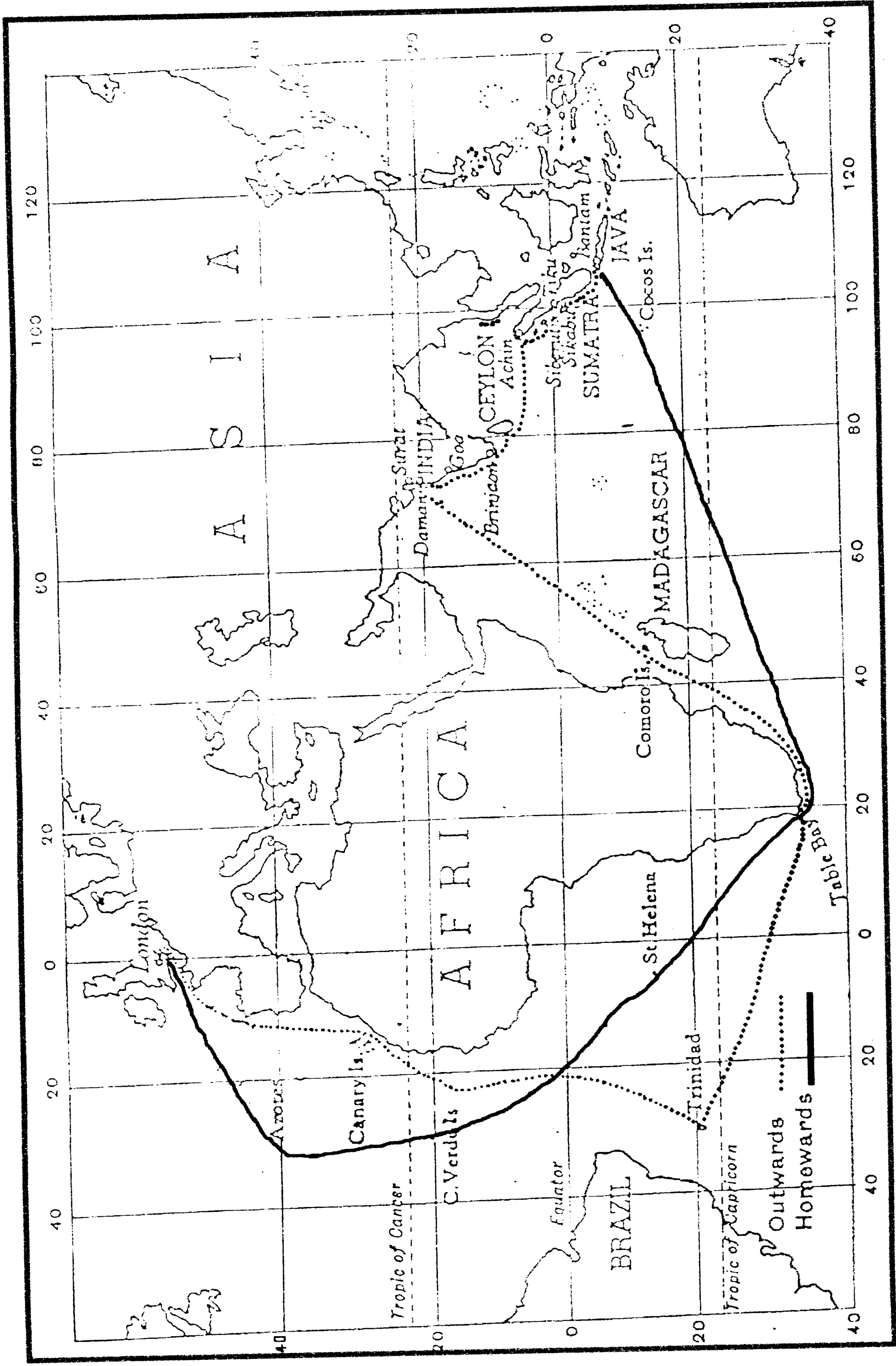
To sum up, we can assume that the people of different caste and profession were engaged in mercantile business of the time. Everyone a peddler or prince merchant, Sarraff and simple trader, shared their hands in advancing the wheel of commerce in 16th century India.¹³⁶

133 Mundy –II, pp 86 -87

134 Moll Herbert, *The Present State of Proper India*, p. 255.

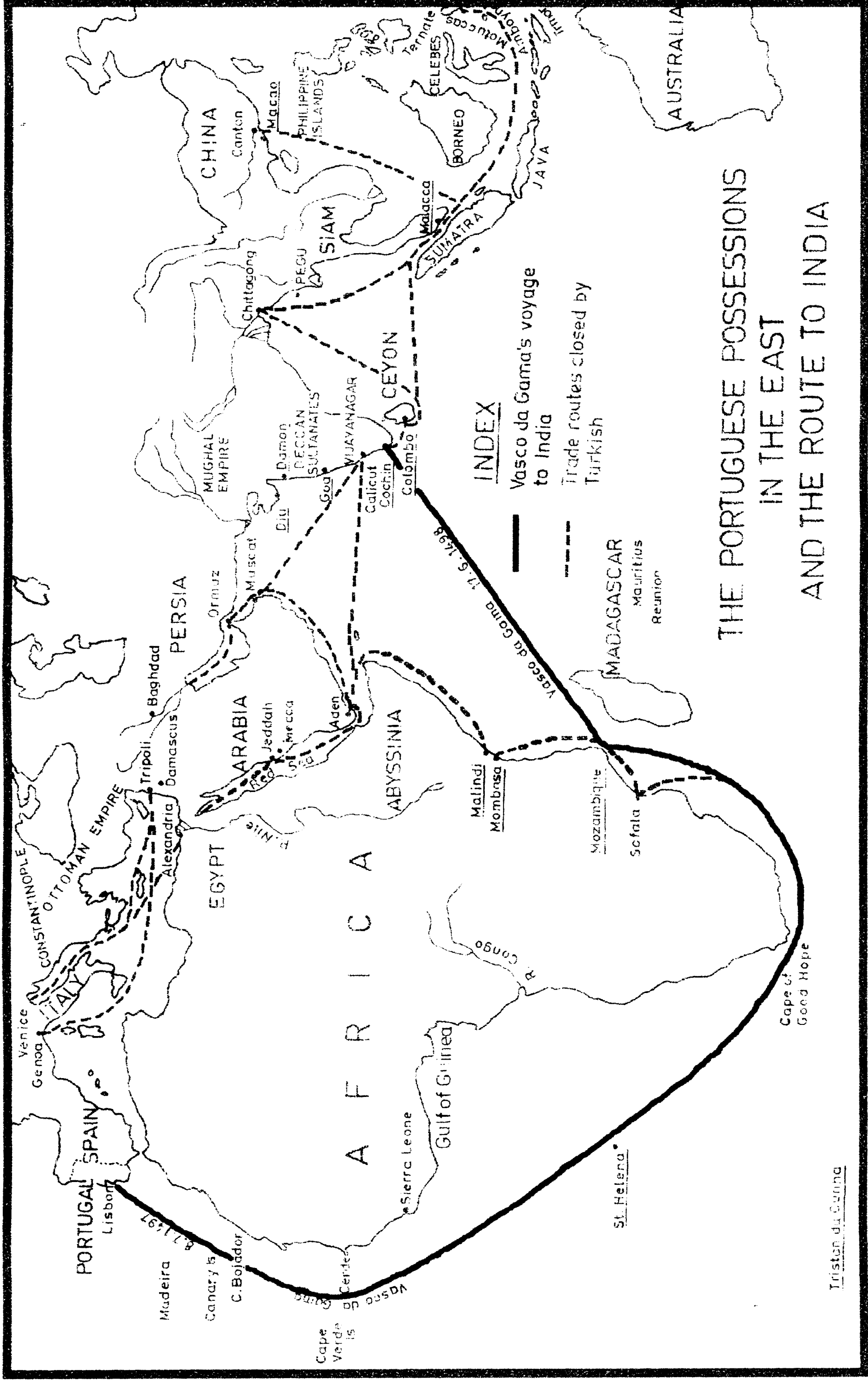
135 Fryer John, *A New Account of East India and Persia*, (ed) W. Crooke, Hak Society London, 1905, p. 88.

136 W. H. Moreland, *India at The Death of Akbar*, pp. 248 -49.

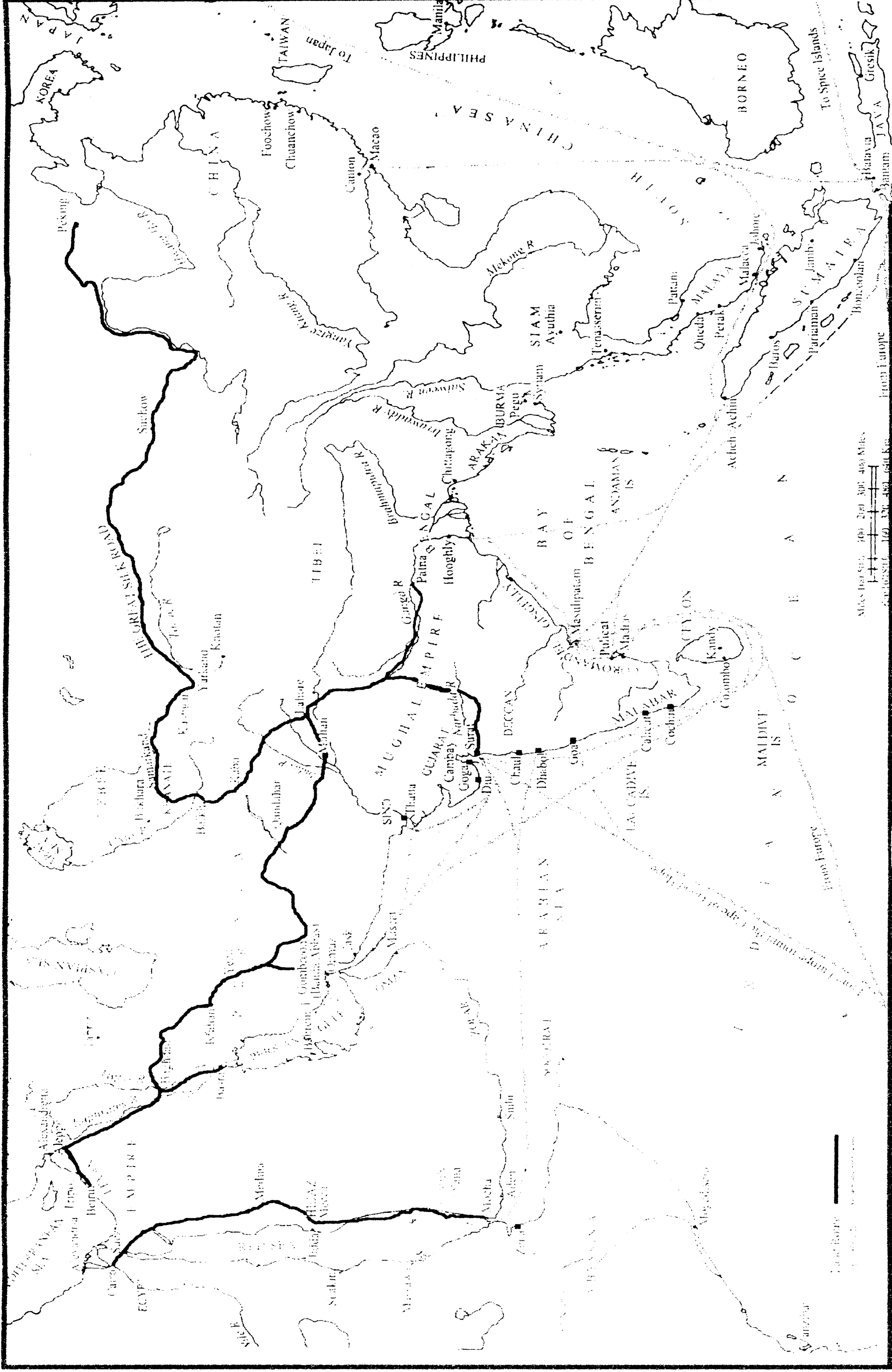


THE VOYAGE OF CAPTAIN BEST

MAP-1



An Historical Atlas of the Indian Peninsula By-C. Colin Davers Map - 2



Asia and the Indian Ocean: Major trades &
Routes and ports 17th Century

Map - 3

CONCLUSION

The Mughal rule is one of the most significant epochs in the annals of medieval period of Indian History. This period (16th and 17th century) is also very rich in source material as various important Persian works were written and thus came into existence. The most notable historian of the entire Mughal age was Abul Fazl. He gave an authentic record of the various aspects of the administration and society, in his master piece *Ain –I –Akbari*. Blochman's greatest tribute to Abul Fazl is when he says, *Ain* stands pre-eminently as a classic work and gives a first hand information regarding the working of various institutions of Akbar's reign. Abul Fazl was an outstanding historian and completed *Magnum-opus* in five years time. The other notable works are *Akbarnama* in 3 volumes and *Insha-I-Abul-Fazl* etc. In the *Ain*, we "have a picture of Akbar's Government in its several departments and we also find that men live and move before us, and the greatest question of the time, axioms, than believed in and success then obtained, are placed before our eyes, in the truthful, and therefore vivid, colour".

Letters written by the early travellers motivated the initiation of the trade with India. They were simply over awed by Abundance and the wide range of commodities, "as nowhere to be seen". It sparked off a national desire to trade with India and the foundation of the East India Company was a sequel to the growing national desire to extend trade in the East.

From Akbar's times, onwards, an era of prosperity dawned to allow a breathing space for the needed development, which was further improved by closer contact with various European countries, who made settlement in India from the beginning of the 17th century. A dynasty, like that of the Mughals, "whose traditions" were all of fighting and conquest of land, never learnt the lesson of sea –power, and the external commerce was permanently at the mercy of the various European Navies, which at different times, commanded India coasts.

With the expansion and consolidation of the Empire under Akbar more attention was given to communication. The acquisition of ports in Gujarat and the growth in trade led the emperor to create additional departments and posts. With the coming of the Europeans, the increased demand for certain commodities influenced the Mughal's commercial policy. To encourage trade, exemptions from or reductions in customs and road tolls were often granted, but, in an attempt to prevent smuggling and other abuses, strict supervision was introduced. As overseas and inter-regional trade grew, the pressure on roads leading to commercial centres increased. This situation was partly a result, partly a cause, of the improved facilities provided by the Government. The responsibility for guarding roads and looking after the safety and comfort of travellers was now transferred from village headmen to zamindars.

In depicting the socio-economic scene during the Mughal period I have relied heavily on the European sources, particularly, the English traveller's Accounts, visiting from time to time. We have to depend on travellers, since we do not find many references in Persian sources though the relevant have been thoroughly used by me. The dismal picture drawn by the travellers regarding the travelling, mode of living, eating and lack of enthusiasm in following day to day life among Indians looks quite amazing. Though we do have accounts of festivals, various methods of recreation enjoyed by the vast masses –and other modes of entertainment, but the state patronage regarding the enforcement of certain good solid measures on the part of Government was altogether missing, though the ceremony of Jahoraka darshan and Meena Bazaar, started by Akbar or others, was there. The picture drawn by the travellers was not that sanguine but grim and alarming. There were no regular hospitals, (Shafakhanas) or the Doctors neither available nor suitable public places for entertainment. We find occasional references from travellers regarding certain ceremonies or certain gatherings performed by the royalty or affluent class. The poor were starving and would be content, at times, with 'Kichdi' or even that was not available at times. The condition of labourers' artisans and farmers etc., their miserable plight and their continuous struggle against poverty and disease, was the regular feature of

those times. Despite these shocking or hardened facts, India survived as its lucrative trade, the hardworking nature of the people and their immense tolerance and adjustment to 'heavy odds' really convince us regarding their perseverance and their will to survive. There is no denying the fact that the "glory of the Mughal Empire was based on the ruins of the nation", as remarked by one historian. But there was a constant inflow of the gold and silver into the country due to the variety and wide range of goods produced and grown by the 'poor farmers' but the royalty played 'ducks and drakes' with the money and enjoyed a luxurious life, to be shown in the glittering pages of the Mughal history.

Though travel accounts are broadly considered as one category of source material, there is, at times, very little ground between the different travellers. Each travel account has some strength and weakness of its own. The same travel account which may be considerably authentic for one type of data may lead to a serious misjudgement on some other point. Of course, every historical piece needs critical evaluation. This is much more so in case of the travel accounts because whereas these help us to make up certain leeway in our knowledge of the socio-economic milieu of contemporary society, they also account for some of the angularities which have resulted from an uncritical acceptance of the testimony of the contemporary travellers.

The travellers describe the chief characteristics of the Mughal government under Akbar to Aurangzeb and throws light on the major Social, economic and political events of the times. In comparison to Persian chronicles, these are a weaker section, as sometimes, the travellers are not fully certain of what they are writing. But despite this limitation, the British travel accounts, are useful for a cross study of the above mentioned events recorded by the Persian chronicles.

In comparison to the Persian chronicles, travel accounts are much more valuable source information on the trade and economy of the period. Of course, these accounts to draw a fair picture of price data of the necessary commodities and customs and tariffs of the period. However, the travel accounts throw a flood of light on the inland and foreign trade, major articles of import and export, and

the balance of trade which was clearly in favour of Mughal India. It is evident from these accounts that the self-subsisting and self-perpetuating village economy was still producing plenty and attracted foreign traders to do quality trade. It also seems reasonable to hold that the later half of seventeenth century witnessed the climax of Indian maritime trade.

The most valuable part of the British travellers , however, is where they record their personal experiences and write of the roads they traversed, the towns they visited, the men they met, the things they saw, the amenities they enjoyed the discomforts they suffered and the difficulties they encountered. These travel accounts are also valuable in two respects -they provide a view of Mughal India through the eyes of the foreigners and their records are unofficial. Secondly, though most of the travellers were no great historical personalities, their accounts are indispensable of travel literature. British travel accounts in the times of Akbar to Aurangzeb had answered many questions concerning different aspects of life, left unanswered by the contemporary Persian chronicles. This is what makes their study virtually of immense importance and utility for the reconstruction of the history of this period. The travellers therefore considered more useful with lesser pitfalls.

The defence of the Mughal Empire from external attack, the consolidation and effective exercise of imperial authority within its eventually far-flung boundaries, and the development and maintenance of its external and internal trade, were all dependent on its roads and communications systems. The two main influences on the formal development and functioning of these systems were India's physical features and the imperial desire to control newly acquired and threatened territories. For political as well as commercial reasons, roads had to be kept in good order. The imperial tours in different parts of the Empire were not mere pleasure trips, but massive fact-finding and political exercises designed to acquaint the emperor and high officials with condition at first hand and to foster a policy of contact between the ruler and the subject. Wherever the emperor went, the roads were greatly improved, and the better their condition the easier was the movement of troops.

The "Great Mughal's" wealth and grandeur was proverbial. His coffers housed the plundered treasure of dozens of concord dynasties; his regalia and throne displayed some of the most spectacular precious stones ever mounted. Nearly all observers were impressed by the opulence and grandeur of the Mughal Empire. The ceremonies, etiquette, music, poetry, and exquisitely executed paintings and objects of the imperial court fused together to create a distinctive aristocratic high culture.

The significant feature of this particular period was visible in the various forms of architecture, visualized in temple, mosque, fort and the architecture of the churches. But the Britishers later on made laudable efforts in founding new cities like, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

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APPENDIX-I

GLOSSARY

This glossary is intended solely for the convenience of readers of this monograph. Fuller definitions and derivations for most of these words will be found in the following texts: H.H. Wilson, *A Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms* (Delhi, 1968); Sir Henry Yule and A.C. Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of anglo-Indian words and words and phrases* (Delhi, 1968); and S.R. Dalgado, *Glossario Euro-Asiatico*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1919-21). The Glossary given is as worked out by Moreland in his works, *The Agriculture of the United Provinces*, *The Revenue Administration of the United Provinces* and *The Agrarian System of Moslem India*.

Abadi – Carries the general sense of populated and cultivated country, population and cultivation necessarily going together. Used to describe a condition, it is best rendered as “prosperity”; when applied to a process, it denotes “development”. the modern sense, “the village site”, does not occur in the literature. the related word, **abadani** denotes “development”.

Affanam (Arabic *Afyun*) – opium

Agaul – A Variety of sugarcane.

Alacha – It was a silken striped stuff.

Aldea – A Village or an estate yielding revenues.

Alim – A Muslim religious scholar or jurist.

Alsi – Linseed.

Altamgha – Grant -- under -- seal -- a special tenure introduced by Jahangir.

Alu - Potato.

Ambari – It was a vulgar form of amari, a turban the canopy of an elephant hauda.

Ambari and Charkhana – It was a linen stripped with white silk form Orissa.

Ambertee or Ambertree – It was from a Hindi word *amirti*. Imarti. Imiriti was a name of cloth in Northern India. This cloth was stouter than the varieties like Daribadi and Khairabadi.

According to another definition or estimate it was a stout close calico of narrow width produced at low cost and in large quantities at Patna.

Amil – In 13th –15th centuries an executive official in genral. From Akbar's time onward, has also the specialised meaning of collector of Reserved revenue, as a variant of the official designation '**amalguzar**'. In this sense, synonymous with **Krori**. In 18th century, used also to denote a Governor, i.e. an officer in charge of the general administration.

Amin – An official deputed for special local work: **Partition amin** is the official who carries out a partition: **Kurk amin** the official who sells distrained crops. Vide (W.H. Moreland, *The Revenue Administration of the United Provinces*, 1911). Also an official designation. Under Sher Shah, probably one of the two chiefs in a **pargana** (but see under **Amir**). Under Akbar, an official on the staff of a Viceroy, whose precise duties are not explained. In 17th century, a revenue – assessor under the provincial **Diwan**. May also apparently be used in a wider sense to denote an officer's "deputy" or "assistant".

Amin-ul-Mulk – The designation of Fathulla Shirazi. when appointed by Akbar to control Todar Mal: may be rendered “Imperial Commissioner”. The designation does not recur.

Amir – In 13th and 14th centuries, a rank of nobility, inferior to **Khan** and superior to **Malik**. In 15th century also a provincial governor. In Bayley’s version of the T. Shershahi (Ellicit, IV), used for a **Pargana** official, but all the MSS> Moreland saw had **Amin**, and he took this to be the correct reading.

Anil (Arabic al-nil) – Indigo.

Ar – The sugarcane border.

Arend – The castor plant.

Arhar – A very common pulse (**Cajanus indicus**).

Ata – Flour.

Awl – It was a tree whose roots were long and slender, used as a dye in many parts of India, the colouring matter remained in the bark of the root.

Babul – A common tree (**Acacia Arabica**).

Baftas – The white cotton cloths or Baftas were mainly manufactured at Agra, Lahore, Bengal, Baroda, Broach and Navsari. Brought unbleached to Navsari and Broach where bleaching was done by lemon juice, found in abundance. The cloths were sold by scores or Koris and ranged between Rs.16 and 300 or 400 per score.

Baga – A grove.

Bahadura – A caterpillar.

Bahar – a weight in South Asian Port, in Indian Islands reckoned to 3 Peculs i.e.,
400 lbs.

Bahikhata – Ledger. The account of grain rent kept by the *Patwari*.

Baisurai – A weed (**Pluchea Lanceolata**).

Bajra – One of the tall millets (**Pennisetum typohideum**).

Bakhshi – He ‘was an official of a high rank...in charge of registration of a body of troops and had to pay them’ (Ency. Islam, I, 600). But it would be incorrect to describe him as ‘Pay master’ of the forces only. Virtually he was the head of military department and secretary for war. His influence extended beyond his own department and he enjoyed significant prestige.

Balaband – A turban band, 3 covids long, wrought with silk and gold.

Balahar – a Hindi word denoting a village menial.

Balpanchit – Injury to cultivation by flood or deposit of sand. A term used in the Ballia district where tenants have a right to reduction of rent on this ground.

Ban – One of the names of cotton.

Bandhuja – field - embankments.

Baneane – Portuguese corruption of *vania*, q. v.

Banian – The word *Baian* really only applicable to the *vania* or Hindu traders of Gujarat.

Banjara – Itinerant grain merchant : Synonym. **Karavani**.

Banjar – Cultivable land which has not been cultivated.

Banksel – A ware house, hence applied to a custom house.

Banyan – English corruption of *vania*, q. v.

Bara – The highly manured land close to a village site.

Bari – One of the names of cotton.

Barre – Safflower (**Carthamus tinctorious**).

Benjan – Member of an Ismaili Shia sect.

Betai – Division of produce in order to payrent in kind.

Division of produce between landholder and tenant. Sharing produce by division.

Bejhar – A mixture of barley and pulses.

Ber – A fruit tree (**Aegle marmelos**).

Beetilha – This material (under the name of originally muslin) was greatly used as the women wear in England during the first half of the 19th century.

Benjamin – A kind of incense derived from the resin.

Bezoar stone – Concretions found in the stomachs of some ruminants specially goats, efficacious in preventing fatal effects of poison.

Bhabar – A tract of country close to the Himalayas.

Bhaiyachara – A form of proprietary tenure.

Bhang – The hemp plant (**Cannibis Satival**). Also the drug made from its leaves.

Bhur – Sand.

Bhusa – Straw trodden into small pieces, used as cattle – fodder.

Bigah – The ordinary unit of area; its size varied within very wide limits, both by place and by period.

Biswa – One twentieth of a **bigah**.

Biswansi – One twentieth of a biswa.

Bila Lagan –] Land held by a cultivator on which the rent payable has
Bila Tasfiya Lagan] not been settled

Cabaye – The long muslim tunie.

Cafila – A land caravan, usually of camels; used by the Portuguese to refer to the
convoys of small trading ships which sailed their auspices.

Cambay – In his monograph always used to refer to the town of this name at the
head of Gulf of Cambay, except in quotations, where Gujarat may be
meant.

Carracks – Large cargo ships used by the Portuguese for Indian trade.

Cartaz – Portuguese permit to native vessels.

Carvel – A small vessel.

Chakla – In 17th century area of Reserved Land placed in charge of an officer
denoted **chakladar**. In 18th century administrative area in Benal.

Chakurana – Land held by a cultivator on which the rent payable has not been
settled.

Chana- Gram.

Charkhi – A pulley; a form of water-lift. Also a cotton gin.

Chaudhri – The headman of a **pargana**.

Chauth – The claim normally one-fourth of the revenue, made by the Marathas
on country, which they overran but did not administer.

Chawal – Husked rice. In some places applied to the growing crop.

Chaya Root: It was a tree whose roots were used for dying red on chintt cloth. It
was mostly found at the coasts of Malabar and Coromundal.

Chehna – One of the small millets.

Chhedda – A caterpillar.

Chints or **Chhints** – These were painted clothes called as ‘calmendar’ by Tavernier meaning thereby Kalamder, derived from qalam, a pen or a brush. Mostly made at Golconda and neighbourhood of Metchlipatam, These were various varieties of chints. On account of their printing and fineness Indians made bed sheets, table cloths and pocket handkerchiefs. In Persia ladies and gents used it for making waist coats.

Chittak – A weight, one-sixteenth of a **ser**, or about two ounces.

Covado – A measuring unit varying much locally in value in European settlement not only in India but in China etc. it is a corruption probably an Indo-Portuguese form of Portuguese Covado, a cubit or ell.

Cowl – An agreement, contract or grant.

Crone – Ten millions (used or rupees).

Daftar -- A record, **Daftar Khana** record office.

Dahi – Curds.

Dakhil Kharij - Proceeding for the alteration of the **Khewat**.

Dam – Under Akbar, a copper coin, worth about 1/40 rupee, but varying in exchange with the silver price of copper. In 17th – 18th centuries a nominal unit (40 to the rupee) in which the valuation was recorded, and in terms of which salaries were fixed, and assignments made.

Dariabadi – Cotton goods made at Daryabad in Barabanki district.

Darogah – A Superintendent of the Custom-house appointed by the *Mutasaddi*. There was another Darogah of the mint.

Dastak – A writ of demand, reminding a landholder that revenue is due from him.

Dastur Has various general senses, “custom”, “permission”, “a Minister”.

Under Akbar and after, a schedule of assesment – rates stated in money:

an abbreviaton of **dastur-ul amal**.

Deh – A village in the Indian sense, which is nearly nearly that of “civil parish”,that is a small area recognised as an administrative unit, not necessarily inhabited : synonyme, **Mauza, Aariyat**.

Dhak – A fuel tree (**Butea frondosa**).

Dhan – Rice.

Dhankar – Heavy clay.

Dhara – A marathi word. applied in 18th century to Murshid Quli’s schedule of assessment rates.

Dharma – the Hindu Sacred law prescribing the duties of all classes, including Kings and not liable, in theory, to alteration.

Dhenkli – A lever used for raising water from wells.

Dhola – The sugarcane borer.

Dhur – One-twentieth of a **biswa-biswansi**.

Dimak – White ants.

Divan – Financial official.

Diwan, Diwani – In 13th-14th centuries, **Diwan** meant a Ministry. In 16th century (1) the Revenue Minister, (2) a noble man’s steward. In 17th century (1) a high official in the Revenue Ministry, (2) the Provincial Revenue Officer. **Diwani** in 16th century, meant the Revenue ministry; in 17th century and later, the revenue and financial administration as a whole; in 19th century the Civil Courts.

Doab -- (**Du-ab**) -- A region lying between two rivers, especially that between the Ganges and the Yamuna.

Doras -- Loam.

Dudia -- white wheat.

Dumat -- Loam.

Dutties : A kind of calico, principally known from its use in loin cloth.

Dyeing -- Baftas or cotton cloths which required dyeing red, blue or black were taken in their original form to the cities of Agra and Ahmedabad where Indigo was grown in plenty and used for dyeing. The costly sorts of baftas were exported in large quantity to the foreign countries.

Eunuch -- A castrated male.

Farman -- A formal order issued by Emperor or King.

Fatwa -- An opinion given by a jurist on a question of Islamic Law.

Faujdar -- An officer of the Government who was in charge of *Chakla* and combined civil and military functions.

In 14th century a military officer, corresponding roughly to General of Division, as being directly under the General in Chief Command. In 16th -- 18th centuries, an officer in charge of the general administration of a province: ordinarily he was not concerned with the revenue administration, but in 18th century an officer was occasionally **Diwan** as well as **Faujdar**. **Faujdari**, the post or the charge of a **Faudar**: from 17th century, also the general, as distinct, from the revenue, administration; and hence, in later times, criminal, as distinct, from civil, jurisdiction.

Fawazil – In 13th –14th centuries, the surplus – revenue which a provincial governor had to remit to the Treasury after defraying sanctioned expenditure.

Fidalgo – A Portuguese gentleman or petty noble, literally “son of a somebody”.

Fluyt – A Dutch word signifying a small ship.

Fusta – Single – masted oared boat, with about forty oarsmen and of about forty tons. In English, “Foist”.

Gajar – Carrots.

Gandhi – The rice sapper.

Ganjar – A tract of country in Sitpur.

Ganna – A type of sugarcane.

Gauhan – The highly manured land near a village site.

Gehun – Wheat.

Ghara – An earthen jar.

Ghi – Clarified butter.

Ghirai –The sugarcane borer.

Ghun – Weevil.

Gingham – An Indian cotton cloth. It is an old English name, probably of Indo-European origin for a stuff made of cotton yarn dyed before being woven.

Girwi – Rust (a disease of wheat and other plants).

Goind – See **Gauhan**.

Gomastah – A native agent under the Company or its servants who purchased goods from the producers.

Gram – Anglicised from Portuguese **grão** : a pulse (*Ciner arietinum*).

Gujai – Wheat Barley grown mixed.

Gumashta – An assistant or subordinate. In the *Ain-i-Akbari*, applied to subordinates employed by the collector in Reserved land.

Gunjayish – “Capacity”, “room”. The technical sense is obscure “ discussed in Ch. V, Sec. 2 of *The Agrarian system of Moslem India*.

Gur – A form of raw sugar.

Guar – One of the pulses (*Cymposis psoralioides*).

Hakim- Not a precise designation, but used to denote any executive officer, whether Viceroy of a province or Governor of smaller area.

Haqq – In addition to the general senses – right, justice, truth, etc. denoted in 13-14 centuries, the perquisites allowed to Chiefs, usually in the form of land free from assessment. **Haqq-i-Shirb**, a term of Islamic law, denoting the right accruing to person who provided water for irrigation.

Harem – Applied to the women of the family and their apartment.

Hasil – Sometimes used as synonym or **Mahsul** denoting either **Produce** or Demand, according to the context. From 16th century usually means Income, as contrasted with Valuation.

Haveli – Environs; but in 14th-14th centuries **Haveli-i-Delhi** denoted a definite administrative area west of Jamuna.

Hindu – Usually carries the ordinary sense, but in Barni (14th century) restricted to the Hindu rural aristocracy, or classes superior to ordinary peasants.

Hindustan – In 13th –14th centuries the country lying East or South of the centre of Muslim power in 14 B.C. century, usually the country beyond the Ganges; from 16th century, India North of the Narbada.

Ijara – In 16th-18th centuries a farm of revenue. The Farmer is usually *Ijaradar* or *Mustaji*.

Ikh – Sugarcane.

Inam – A reward. Applied especially to gifts made by the King, whether in the form of a sum of money, or stipend paid in cash, or a grant of revenue. In 17th century commonly a grant of revenue made to a high officer as supplement to his assignment.

Iqta – An assignment of revenue; synonymys, **Jagir, Tugyul**. In 13th-14th centuries also a Province.

Iqtadar – Holder of an assignment. (Not used in the sense of Governor of a Province, who has designated **Muqti**).

Ismaili- a much divided group within the Muslim *shia* community.

Jagir – A grant of land to an officer of the State. An assessment of revenue.
Synonyms. **Iqta, Tuyul**.

Jagirdar – Holdr of a Jagir.

Jai – Oats.

Jalkar – Rights of fishing.

Jama – (In Arabic, **Jam**, in Urdu, usually **Jama**). Aggregate. (1) In accounts, the credit-side (2) In revenue, either Demand or, Valuation, according to the context.

Jamabandi – The *Patwari*'s record of village accounts.

Jamun – A fruit tree (*Eugenia Jamabolana*).

Jarhan- Transplanted rice.

Jarib – A land measure; also measuring instrument. In 16th century used to denote assessment by measurement, as synonym or *Paimash*.

Jati – A relatively homogeneous Hindu or Jain endogamous group based mostly on occupation. Loosely used interchangeably with the term “caste”.

Jhabar – Heavy Clay.

Jhau – A river-side shrub (*Taramix gallica*).

Jhil – A depression filled with water.

Jinspher – Cash rents collected for particular crops on land that is ordinarily grain rented.

Jiziya – The personal tax imposed by Islamic law on non-Muslim subjects.

Jowar – A millet (*Andropogon sorghum*).

Kabar – One of the Bundelkhand soil.

Kachchha – Literally ‘raw’. Its technical meaning in revenue administration: A collector of revenue or rent, a money due on any account is appointed *Kachchha*, if he has certain definite sums to collect and account for and is remunerated for his work by the person who appoints him.

Kachhar – Low land along a river.

Kachina – Market garden crops.

Kakan – One of the small millets (*Setaria Italica*)

Kankar – Lumps of limestone found in the soil.

Kanungo – Officials in charge of *patwaris*.

Kankut – Determination of rant by estimation of the produce of land.

Kans – A weed common in Bundelkhand.

Kapas – Cotton.

Karavaniyan – Used by Barni to denote the itinerant grain-merchants, usually called *Banjaras*.

Karinda – A landholder's agent.

Karkun – Literally, agent or deputy. From 16th century usually means a clerk, writer. The same meaning is appropriate in some 13th-14th centuries passages, but they are too few to show with certainty whether the word had become specialised by that period.

Kattqah (Cottah) – One-twentieth of a **Biswa** = **Biswani**.

Khader – Low land along a river.

Khalisa – Land Reserved for the State, as opposed to land Assigned or Granted to individuals.

Kham – See Kachcha.

Kham Tehsil – Annulment of the settlement with a landholder.

Khangah – A hospine for *sufis*, q.v.

Kharaj – The tribute imposed by Islamic law on non-Muslims permitted to remain in occupation of conquered land: in India, revenue – demand.

Kharaji – denotes country liable to Kharaj, as distinguished from country paying tithe (**Ushr**).

Kharbuza – Melons.

Kharif – The rains season, and the crops grown in it.

Khasra – The *Patwari*'s field work.

Khatauni – The *Patwari*'s record of landholder's rights.

Khidmati – A present given by an inferior to a superior.

Khojah – Member of the Ismaili shia sect which today recognizes the Agha Khan as its head.

Khudkasht – Land cultivated by the landholder.

Khurpi – A hoe.

Khut – Used only by Barni, to denote chiefs.

Khwaja – Usually a honorific title. In 13th century designation of an officer of the staff of a province, whose functions are not clearly indicted.

Kiari – Compartments of a field made for irrigation.

Kikar – See Babul.

Kili – A system of raising water from wells.

Kintal – A eight equivalent to Bahar.

Kist – An installment of revenue or rent.

Kodon – One of the small millets (*Paspalum serobiculatum*).

Kotwal – Magistrate, Superintendent of Police and Civil Officer rolled into one.

Kroh – A measure of distance, about one and half miles.

Kror – Ten millions (100 lakhs).

Krori – In 16th century the popular designation of the collector of Reserved revenue, known officially as **Amalguzar**. In 17th century used officially in this sense and also to denote the collector employed by an Assignee.

Kurai – Early rice.

Kusum – See Barre.

Kutki – One of the small millets (*Panicum psilapodium*).

Lagar – A system of raising water from wells.

Lahi – Some varieties of rape or mustard.

Lakh – One hundred thousand.

Lallia – Red Wheat.

Lambardar – The representative of the land-holders of a *mahal*.

Larin – A peculiar kind of money formerly in use of Persian gulf, on the western coast of Malabar islands. Less than an English, shilling.

Lawahi – A fungus disease of sugarcane.

Lubia – One of the autumn pulses (*Vigna Catjang*).

Mahajan – A body governing in commercial matters people engaged in a particular occupation. Also a city-wide body regulating all commercial matters.

Mahal – A unit of revenue assessment. Under Akbar, a revenue-subdivision, corresponding usually, but not invariably, with *pargana*; and occasionally applied also to a head of miscellaneous revenue. The modern form, **Mahal**, does not appear before 18th century.

Mahsul – May mean, according to the context, either produce or demand; and, in 16th century documents, also the average-produce calculated for assessment-purposes.

Mahun – An aphid that attacks mustard.

Makai, Makka – Maize.

Makra, Mandwa – A small millet (*Eleusine Coracana*)

Mal – General sense, property or possessions. In agrarian matters usually means Demand, but sometimes has the wider sense of revenue administration. In the Army, denoted booty taken in war.

Malik – In 13th-14th centuries a rank of nobility, inferior to *Amir*. Later, an honorific title used more vaguely.

Malik – Carried the general idea of sovereignty or dominion. In Islamic law, applied to an occupant of land, and used in one of Aurangzeb's *Farman*s to denote a peasant.

Malikana – Payments to persons whose claims to a share of the income of a *mahal* has been recognised but who have not been admitted to the settlement for it. **Malikana**, in the British period, denotes an allowance made to a landholder, or claimant, excluded from possession.

Manjhar – The intermediate zone of land in a village.

Mar – One of the Bundelkhand soils.

Masahat – Measurement, Survey. In 14th century denoted the process of assessment by Measurement, which in later times was called **Jarib**, or **Paimash**.

Mash – One of the autumn pulses (*Phaseolous radiatus*).

Masha – An Indian weight, equal to 15 grains.

Masur – One of the cold weather pulses (*Ervum lens*).

Matahatdar - Under Proprietors in Oudh.

Matiyar – Clay.

Mattar – Peas.

Maund – Anglicised from *Mann*, a unit of weight containing 40 *ser*. The size of the unit varied with both time and locality.

Mauza – In 13th century used generally in a wide sense as a place or locality; later, denotes a village (in the Indian sense); Synonym of *Deh*.

Milk – A grant for subsistence, resumable at pleasure.

Miyana – Middling, moderate, avoiding extremes.

Mohwa – A large fruit tree (*Bassia latifolia*).

Mota – A bed of still soil forming the foundation of a well.

Moth – One of the autumn pulses (*Phaseolus Aconitifolius*).

Moti – ‘Thick’ used in Bundelkhand to distinguish the better *rakar* soil from the worse.

Muapi – Land given free of rent, or revenue.

Muhasaba – Audit of an official’s accounts.

Muhassil – Etymologically, a Collector. In 14th century an official with unspecified functions, appointed by the King in the territory of a Chief.

Muhasilana, in 16th century denoted fees paid in connection with revenue collection.

Mikaddam, Muqaddam – A representative of the cultivators of a village. In 13th-14th centuries sometimes a leading or prominent man; sometimes, specifically a village headman. From 16th century the latter use predominates.

Muli – Radishes.

Mundia – Beardles wheat.

Mung – One of the autumn pulses (*Phaseolous mungo*).

Mungphala, Mungphali – Ground nuts.

Muqasama – In Islamic Law, assessment on production, as opposed to occupation (which later is *Muwazzaf-vide Wazifa*).

Muqti – In 13th-14th centuries a provincial Governor; obsolete by 16th Century.

Muqti'i – This word has been found only one passage (*Ain-i-296*) and its meaning is uncertain; it may point to either Farming or Assignment.

Murries – Mulberry Coloured cloth.

Mushahada – Discussed in Appendix C. of The Agrarian System of Moslem India, where Moreland has interpreted the word as sharing – by estimation, the Hindi *Kankut*. Does not occur after 14th Century.

Mutalaba – The early use is to denote the process of demanding, or recovery; from 17th Century it may mean the amount of the revenue – Demand.

Mutasarrif – Minor officials; Moreland was doubtful whether it denoted some particular official, or a class of officials.

Myrobalan – A dried fruit, formerly used in medicine.

Nagarsheth – Head, elected or hereditary, of a city-wide mahajan, q.v.

Naib – Deputy. In 13th – 14th Centuries denotes an officer sent to a province to perform the duties of the Governor, when the Governor held also a Court appointment, or was employed on other duty.

Narma – A variety of cotton.

Nasaq – The general sense is “order” or “administration”. Under Akbar, applied to a particular form of revenue-administration, which Moreland identified with the Group-assessment, though it may cover also Farming.

Nazim – A Viceroy.

Nijjot – Khudkasht.

Nil – Indigo.

Nila Thota – Copper sulphate.

Nim – A tree (*Melia azadirachta*).

Nishan – An order issued by the Prince.

Nona Mitti – Earth containing saltpetre.

Paimash – Measurement. In 16th century denoted the process of assessment, by Measurement, as a synonym for *Jarib*.

Pakka – A collector of revenue, or rent, or money due to any account, is appointed **Pakka** if he undertakes to pay a fixed sum and his remuneration depends on what he can collect in addition.

Paleo – Watering land to prepare seed-bed.

Palo - The outlying zone of land in a village.

Pan - The betel plant (*Piper betle*).

Panch – Body regulating trade matters for a group of artisans.

Panchayat – A governing council in general.

Pargana – The Indian name for an aggregate of villages. Came into official Muslim use in 14th Century partially superseding **Qasba**.

Parjot – Ground rent paid by persons other than cultivators living in a village.

Parwa – One of the Bundelkhand soils.

Parwana – A warrant, an order from the high Mughal nobles such as the Nawab.

Parti – Fallow land: **Parti Jahid** is land, which has been fallow for not more than three years; after three years it is **Parti Kadim**.

Patah, Patela – A beam of wood used a cold-crusher or roller.

Patel – Head of a Panch, q.v., headman in general.

Patha – A tract of Bundelkhand.

Patolas – The word Patolas is from Pattuda, a Silk cloth at Ahmedabad the patolas were decorated with flowers of various kinds.

Pattamar – A foot runner.

Patri – ‘Thin’, used in Bundelkhand to distinguish the worst *rakar* soil from the better.

Patsan – Roselle hemp (*Hibiscus cannabinus*)

Patta – Lease. The document given to a revenue – payer, indicating the sum which he had to pay.

Patti – A division of a *Mahal*; **Pattidari** is a landholder having part of a *mahal*.

Pattidar is the form of tenure in which several landholders have separate possession in a *mahal*.

Patwari – The village-accountant, a Hindi term adopted from the outset in Muslim administration.

Paunda – Thick sugarcane, grown usually for fruit.

Pecul – The Malaya equivalent of the Chinese of 100 calies (about 133 lbs).

Peshkash – Tribute; a fine or present to the ruling power on receiving an appointment or assignment of revenue, or on the renewal of a grant or the like.

Phangi – The cane-hopper.

Phaora – A spade.

Pial – Rice straw.

Pir – Head of a sufi group; a Muslim mistier in general.

Pissi – Soft Wheat (Bundelkhand).

Posta – Poppy.

Pukhta – See Pakka. **Pukhtadar** is a sub settlement – holder in Oudh.

Qabuliyat – Written undertaking given for the payment for revenue; the counterpart of a *patta*.

Qanungo – The **pargana** accountant and registrar. The position certainly existed in the Hindu period but Hindi designation appears nowhere in the chronicles. The word *Qanun* in 13th-14th Centuries had not acquired the modern sense of “Law”, but denoted “custom” or “practice”; and **Qanungo** must be interpreted, not as ‘expounder of law” but as “interpreter of custom”, i.e., it denotes the men to whom Muslim administrators looked for information regarding the customs of their Hindu subjects.

Qariyat – A village, synonym if *Deh*.

Qasba - The current meaning “town” has not been found in the chronicles. The earliest writers used *Qasba* to denote a *pargana*; from Afif onwards, *Pargana* was adopted as a Persian word, but *qasba* survived as an occasional synonym.

Qazi - An official in the Islamic system, with duties mainly judicial, but also executive. There is no precise English equivalent, but in the Mughal period the **Qazi** might be described as the judicial assistant of the Governor.

Qismat-i-Ghalla – Division of grain. In 16th Century, a name for assessment by Sharing.

Rabi - In India, the winter; the crops grown in winter and harvested in spring.

Rai, Raja, Rana, Rao – Hindi terms denoting a King or Chief, whether independent of paying tribute or revenue to the Muslim King.

Rakar – One of the Budelkhand soils.

Ramdana – A food plant (*Anaranthus candatus*).

Ragmai – A description applied to Akbar's First valuation. Its precise significance is obscure.

Ratau – Rust on wheat (See **Girvi**).

Ray – In 16th Century denotes a schedule of crop-rates prepared for assessment purposes, and showing the Demand in terms of produce: oppose to **Dastur**, a schedule of cash assessment rates. The words has survived locally in Benaras in the sense of "rent-rate".

Reh – Efflorescence of soda-salts on the soil.

Rendi – The castor plant (See **Arend**).

Ryot – (Anglicised form of **Raiyat**). A herd, the peasantry as a body. The use to denote an individual peasant has not been found in the chronicles; the use to denote a particular form of tenure (*ryotwari*) belongs wholly to the British period.

Sadr – In the Mughal period, the designation of a high officer whose duties included the supervision of Grants.

Salami – a present offered to an official on approaching him.

Salampores -- It was from Salem, in Telegu meant weaver and Pura means town, weaver's town. It was a kind of cotton cloth formerly manufactured at Nelhore.

Samjhauta – Settlement of accounts among the *pattidars* of a *mahal*.

San, Sanai – False hemp (*Crotolaria Juncea*).

Sanad – A grant, a charter, a patent: a document conveying rights.

Sanah or Sannas – A kind of fine cloth.

Sarkar – In the chronicles usually means a treasury, whether belonging to the King or to a noble. Under Sher Shah, denoted an administrative district i.e. an aggregate of **parganas**: Under Akbar, a revenue district. The modern meaning “Government” does not appear clearly in the chronicles.

Sarraf – A banker; a merchant.

Sarson – Rape of mustard.

Sawan – A small millet (usually *panicum frumentaccum* but also applied to *panicum miliaceum*).

Sazawal – A rent-collector.

Sehwan - A disease of wheat.

Ser – A unit of weight, about two pounds, one fortieth of a *maund*, and, like the *maund*, varying with time and with locality.

Shahna – A watcher put over crops distrained on for rent or revenue.

Shakkarqand – Sweet potatoes (*Ipomoea batatas*).

Shamilat – Property common to two or more *pattis* of a *mahal*.

Sheth – Head of an occupational mahajan, q.v.

Siaha – The *patwari*'s cash-account of a *mahal*,

Shiqq – Division. Apparently at first a military term; an extraordinary force (*Tashkhar*) was divided into main groups (*fauj*) and these again into smaller groups (*shiqq*). In 14th Century an administrative area, either a province, or a division of province. In 15th Century, a province, or a division of a province. Not used in later times in this sense.

Shiqqdar – At first, a military rank (vide **Shiqq**); later a revenue subordinate.

Under Sher Shah, one of the officers on the staff of *pargana*, also a revenue collector employed by an Assignee. The term survived into 18th Century to denote a subordinate, revenue-official, usually as Assignee servant.

Shisham – A timber tree (*Dalbergia Sissoo*)

Sharoff (Hindi Sarraf) – A money changer.

Siaha – The *patwari*'s cash-accounts of a *mahal*.

Silsilah – A sufi, q.v. order.

Sir – Land cultivated by the landholder as his home farm. Or land held by a landholder with special privileges, see Sections XVIII. *The Revenue Administration of the Untied Provinces*.

Sit – An iron rod used for finding Kankar.

Siwai – Miscellaneous income of a *mahal*.

Suba – In the Mughal period, a province of the Empire.

Subah – Province.

Subahdar – Governor of a *subah* or province.

Sufi – A Muslim mystic, a member of a Sunni Muslim religious order.

Surthi – Tobacco prepared for chewing.

Suyurghal – In the Mughal period, allowances granted by the Emperor, whether paid in cash, or by Grants or land.

Tafriq – The distribution of the Demand, determined by Group-Assessment, over the individuals composing the group.

Tahsildar – The Officer who collects revenue.

Takavi – State loans for agricultural purposes.

Talukdar – In Oudh a landholder with special privileges. In Agra usually a superior proprietor but sometimes an inferior proprietor.

Taluq – Dependency came into use at end of 17th Century to denote the possession of land, whatever the title. Has been specialised in the British period to denote particular titles, which differ in different provinces.

Taluqdar denotes the holder of a *Taluq*.

Tambaku - Tobacco.

Tanka – The chief monetary unit, 13th-16th Centuries.

Taraf - A division of a *mahal*.

Tarai - A tract of land below the Himalayas : also applied to the low land along rivers.

Tarbuz – Water-melon.

Tarmin Jamabandi – Proceedings for correcting the record of cultivators rights.

Tari – Low land along the Bundelkhand rivers.

Teli – An oil presser.

Theka – Lease of the right to collect rent.

Thekadar – A lessee of landholder's rights.

Thok – A division of a *mahal*, usually containing two or more *pattis*.

Til – An oil-seed (*Sesamum indicum*).

Tuyul – An assignment of revenue, synonymous with **Jagir**, **Iqta**.

Ukh – Sugarcane.

Ulama – Plural of alim. q.v.

Uparhar – High ground as opposed to *Kachhar* or *tarai*.

Urd – An autumn pulse (See *mash*).

Usar – Barren land. Usually clay too stiff to be cultivated and containing soda.

Ushr – The tithe levied under Islamic law. **Ushri** denotes country liable to the tithe, as opposed to **Kharaji**.

Vania – A Gujarati Hindu or Jain merchant.

Varna – The four (Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya, Sudra) ritual divisions of Hindu society.

Vakil- In 13th – 14th Centuries the *Vakil-i-dar* was apparently the highest ceremonial officer at the Delhi Court. In the Mughal period, the *Vakil* was Prime Minister and superior to the *Vazir*; but the post was not always filled, and, when it was vacant, the Vazir was practically Prime Minister.

Wafa – Lit. “faith”, “reliance”, was used in 14th – 15th centuries in the technical sense of the yield of crops.

Wajibularz – The record of village-customs prepared at the earlier settlements.

Wali – Usually a provincial Governor, sometimes the ruler of a foreign country.

Waqianavis – He was the King’s public intelligence and was a check on the powers of the Governor of *Subah* and other high officers.

Wazifa – In Islamic Law, denotes a periodical payment for the occupation of land, and the derived word **Muwazzaf** denotes assessment on occupation, or what Moreland called contract-holding. In the chronicles, **Wazifa** usually means a charitable or compassionate allowance granted by the King, and paid in cash, as distinguished from a grant of land or revenue (**milk**, or **Madad-i-Mash**); occasionally it is applied to a Grant of revenue.

Wilayat – Commonly in 13th-14th Centuries a province under a **Wali**; but may mean also, (i) the Kingdom, (ii) a tract or region, (iii) a foreign country, (iv) the home-country of a foreigner. The meaning “province” had practically disappeared in the Mughal period.

Wiran – Deserted. Applied to a village, which had been abandoned and was uncultivated.

Xerafim – The standard Goan silver coin, consisting of 300 reis, and roughly equal to Rs. 1 ½ .

Zabt – In Akbar’s time, the system of assessment by measurement as then practised. The adjective **Zabti** used to denote an area where the system was in force. In later times **Zabti** denoted a revenue-rate, or rent-rate, levied on the area sown, and varying with the crop.

Zamindar – Lit. “Landholder”. The word does not necessarily imply any particular claim or title, and in 18th Century was used in Bengal to denote any sort of holder. In the literature of North India, from 14th Century onwards, it meant what Moreland called a Chief, that is, a Landholder with title or claim antecedent to Muslim rule, commonly a *Raja*, *Rao* or some other Hindu King, who had become tributary to the Muslim state. It is occasionally applied also to rulers who had not become tributary.

Zamindari – The form of tenure in which a *mahal* is held either by an individual

Zamindari Wahid or by a group who manage it as an undivided unit (**Zaindari bil-ijmal**).

Zamorin – Title of the Hindu rulers of cabinet.

Zer-ab – Land covered by water.



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